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THE BRIDGEWATER TREATISES

ON THE POWER WISDOM AND GOODNESS OF GOD

AS MANIFESTED IN THE CREATION

TREATISE I

ON THE ADAPTATION OF EXTERNAL NATURE TO THE MORAL AND INTELLECTUAL CONSTITUTION OF MAN

BY THE REV. T. CHALMERS D.D.

IN TWO VOLUMES

ON THE POWER WISDOM AND GOODNESS OF GOD AS MANIFESTED IN THE ADAPTATION OF EXTERNAL NATURE TO THE MORAL AND INTELLECTUAL CONSTITUTION OF MAN

BY THE

REV. THOMAS CHALMERS D. D.

PROFESSOR OF DIVINITY IN THE UNIVERSITY

OF EDINBURGH

VOL I

59822

LONDON

WILLIAM PICKERING

1833

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C. WHITTINGHAM, TOOKS COURT, CHANCERY LANE.

TO THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE AND RIGHT REVEREND

CHARLES JAMES,

LORD BISHOP OF LONDON.

MY LORD,

YOUR Lordship's personal kindness to myself would alone have inclined me to solicit for this work the honour of your patronage and name.

But I must further confess the peculiar satisfaction which I feel, in offering it as a tribute and a public acknowledgment of my admiration for an order of men, who, more than all others, have enriched by their labours the moral and theological literature of England.

In the prosecution of that arduous and hitherto almost unattempted theme which the late President of the Royal Society has, by your Lordship's recommendation, assigned to me, I have derived greater aid from the views and reasonings of Bishop Butler, than I have been able to find besides, in the whole range of our existent authorship.

With his powerful aid I commenced the high investigation to which your Lordship has called me. To imagine that I have completed it, would be to forget at once the fulness of the Creation, and the finitude of the Creature. Whatever the department of Nature may be which we explore, in quest of evidence for the perfections of its Author, there is no inquirer, though even of the most transcendent powers, who shall ever attain the satisfaction of having traversed the whole length and breadth of the land. He will have but entered and proceeded a certain way, within the margin

of a territory, whose riches are inexhaustible.

That your Lordship may long continue, by your zeal, and talents, and lofty erudition, to sustain the honours, and to promote the vital good of our Religious Establishments in this empire, is the fervent desire and prayer of

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obliged

and obedient Servant,

THOMAS CHALMERS.

Edin. May 13, 1833.

NOTICE.

THE series of Treatises, of which the present is one, is published under the following circumstances:

The RIGHT HONOURABLE and REVEREND FRANCIS HENRY, EARL of BRIDGEWATER, died in the month of February, 1829; and by his last Will and Testament, bearing date the 25th of February, 1825, he directed certain Trustees therein named to invest in the public funds the sum of Eight thousand pounds sterling; this sum, with the accruing dividends thereon, to be held at the disposal of the President, for the time being, of the Royal Society of London, to be paid to the person or persons nominated by him. The Testator further directed, that the person or persons selected by the said President should be appointed to write, print, and publish one thousand copies of a work *On the Power, Wisdom, and Goodness of God, as manifested in the Creation; illustrating such work by all reasonable arguments, as for instance the variety and formation of God's creatures in the animal, vegetable, and mineral kingdoms; the effect of digestion, and thereby of conversion; the construction of the hand of man, and an infinite variety of other arguments; as also by discoveries ancient and modern, in arts, sciences, and the whole extent of literature.* He desired, moreover, that the profits arising from the sale of the works so published should be paid to the authors of the works.

The late President of the Royal Society, Davies Gilbert, Esq. requested the assistance of his Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury and of the Bishop of London, in determining upon the best mode of carrying into effect the intentions of the Testator. Acting with their advice, and with the concurrence of a nobleman immediately connected with the deceased, Mr. Davies Gilbert appointed the following eight gentlemen to write separate Treatises on the different branches of the subject as here stated:

THE REV. THOMAS CHALMERS, D.D.

PROFESSOR OF DIVINITY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH.

ON THE ADAPTATION OF EXTERNAL NATURE TO THE MORAL AND INTELLECTUAL CONSTITUTION OF MAN.

JOHN KIDD, M.D. F.R.S.

REGIUS PROFESSOR OF MEDICINE IN THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD.

ON THE ADAPTATION OF EXTERNAL NATURE TO THE PHYSICAL CONDITION OF MAN.

THE REV. WILLIAM WHEWELL, M.A. F.R.S.

FELLOW OF TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

ON ASTRONOMY AND GENERAL PHYSICS.

SIR CHARLES BELL, K.H. F.R.S.

THE HAND: ITS MECHANISM AND VITAL ENDOWMENTS AS EVINCING DESIGN.

PETER MARK ROGET, M.D.

FELLOW OF AND SECRETARY TO THE ROYAL SOCIETY.

ON ANIMAL AND VEGETABLE PHYSIOLOGY.

xi

THE REV. WILLIAM BUCKLAND, D. D. F. R. S.

CANON OF CHRIST CHURCH, AND PROFESSOR OF GEOLOGY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD.

ON GEOLOGY AND MINERALOGY.

THE REV. WILLIAM KIRBY, M. A. F. R. S.

ON THE HISTORY, HABITS, AND INSTINCTS OF ANIMALS.

WILLIAM PROUT, M. D. F. R. S.

ON CHEMISTRY, METEOROLOGY, AND THE FUNCTION OF DIGESTION.

His Royal Highness the Duke of Sussex, President of the Royal Society, having desired that no unnecessary delay should take place in the publication of the above mentioned treatises, they will appear at short intervals, as they are ready for publication.

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PREFACE.

It is an incongruous thing, when there is any want of conformity between the subject matter of an essay, and its title. The object of this explanatory preface is to shew that it is an incongruity into which we have not fallen.

In the first place we were not in fair circumstances for expounding the adaptation of external nature to the mental constitution of man, till we had made manifest in some degree what that constitution is. There is no distinct labourer in that conjunct demonstration of the divine attributes which is now being offered to the world, to whom this essentially preliminary topic had been assigned as the subject of a separate work. It was therefore unavoidable, that, to a certain extent we should undertake it ourselves, else, in proceeding to the construction of our argument, we might have incurred the charge

of attempting to rear a superstructure, without a foundation to rest upon.

But in the execution of this introductory part of our subject, we could scarcely have refrained from noticing the indications of divine wisdom and goodness in our mental constitution itself, even though our strictly proper, because our assigned task, was to point out these indications in the adaptation of this constitution to external nature. We could not forget that the general purpose of the work was to exhibit with all possible fulness the argument for the character of the Deity, as grounded on the laws and appearances of nature. But we should have left out a very rich and important track of argument, had we forborne all observation on the evidence for the divine perfections, in the structure and processes of the mind itself, and confined ourselves to the evidence afforded by the relations which the mind bore to the external world. In the adaptation of external nature to man's physical constitution, there are many beautiful and decisive indications of a God. But prior to these, there is a multitude of distinct indications, both in the human anatomy, and the human

physiology, viewed by themselves, and as separate objects of contemplation. And accordingly, in this joint undertaking, there have been specific labourers assigned to each of these departments. But we have not had the advantage of any previous expounder for the anatomy of the mind, or the physiology of the mind; and we felt that to have left unnoticed all the vivid and various inscriptions of a Divinity, which might be collected there, would have been to withhold from view some of the best attestations in the whole range and economy of nature, for the wisdom and benevolence of its great architect.

But to construct a natural theology on any subject, it is not necessary to make of that subject a full scientific exposition. The one is as distinct from the other, as the study of final is from the study of efficient causes—the former often lying patent to observation, while the latter may be still involved in deepest obscurity. It were a manifest injury to our cause, it were to bedim the native lustre of its evidences—did we enter with it among the recondite places of the mental philosophy, and there enwrap it in the am-

biguity of questions yet unresolved, in the mist of controversies yet unsettled. Often, though not always, the argument for a God in some phenomenon of nature depends upon its reality, and not upon its analysis, or the physical mode of its origination—on the undoubted truth that so it is, and not on the undetermined, perhaps indeterminable question of how it is. We should not have shrunk from the obscurer investigation, had it been at all necessary. But that is no reason why time must be consumed on matters which are at once obscure and irrelevant. It is all the more fortunate that we are not too long detained from an entry on our proper task, among the depths or the difficulties of any preliminary disquisition which comes before it—and that the main strength of the argument which our mental constitution, taken by itself, furnishes to the cause of theism, lies not in those subtilties which are apprehended only by few, but in certain broad and palpable generalities which are recognised by all men.

But there is another explanation which we deem it necessary to make, in order fully to reconcile the actual topics of our essay,

with the designation which has been prefixed to it.

If by external nature be meant all that is external to mind, then the proper subject of our argument is the adaptation of the material to the mental world. But if by external nature be meant all that is external to one individual mind, then would the subject be very greatly extended; for beside the reciprocal influence between that individual mind, and all sensible and material things, we should consider the reciprocal influence between it and all other minds. By this contraction of the idea from the mental world to but one individual member of it; and this proportional extension in the idea of external nature from the material creation to the whole of that living, as well as inanimate creation, by which any single man is surrounded; we are introduced not merely to the action and reaction which obtain between mind and matter; but, which is far more prolific of evidence for a Deity, to the action and reaction which obtain between mind and mind. We thus find access to a much larger territory, which should otherwise be left unexplored—and have the

opportunity of tracing the marks of a divine intelligence in the mechanism of human society, and in the frame-work of the social and economical systems to which men are conducted, when they adhere to that light, and follow the impulse of those affections which God has bestowed on them.

But in the progress of our argument, we come at length to be engaged with the adaptations of external nature, even in the most strict and limited sense of the term. In the origin and rights of property, as well as in the various economic interests of society, we behold the purest exemplification of that adjustment which obtains between the material system of things and man's moral nature—and when we proceed to treat of his intellectual constitution, it will be found that the harmonies between the material and the mental worlds are still more numerous, and more palpably indicative of that wisdom which originated both, and conformed them with exquisite and profound skill to each other.

INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER.

GENERAL AND PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS.

1. EXTERNAL nature, when spoken of in contradistinction to mind, suggests chiefly, if not solely, the idea of the material universe. Even though restricted to this limited and proper sense of the term, we should still behold the proofs of beneficent design in the fitnesses of the one to the other; but far more abundantly and decisively, it must be confessed, in the adaptation of external nature to the physical, than in its adaptation to the moral and intellectual constitution of man. For fully developing our peculiar argument, an enlargement of the meaning commonly affixed to external nature seems indispensable,—an enlargement that we should not have ventured on, if in so doing we crossed the legitimate boundaries of our assigned subject; and that, for the mere purpose of multiplying our topics, or possessing ourselves of a wider field of authorship. But the truth is, that did we confine our notice to the relations which obtain between the world of mind and the world of matter, we should be doing

injustice to our own theme, by spoiling it of greatly more than half its richness,—beside leaving unoccupied certain fertile tracts of evidence, which, if not entered upon in our division of the general work, must, as is obvious from the nature of the respective tasks, be altogether omitted in the conjunct demonstration that is now being offered to the public, of the Goodness and Wisdom of the Deity.

2. It is true that, with even but one solitary human mind in midst of the material creation, certain relations could be traced between them that would indicate both skill and a benevolent purpose on the part of Him who constructed the framework of nature, and placed this single occupier within its confines. And, notwithstanding this limitation, there would still be preserved to us certain striking adaptations in the external system of things to the intellectual, and some too, though fewer and less noticeable, to the moral constitution of man. But, born as man obviously is for the companionship of his fellows, it must be evident that the main tendencies and aptitudes of his moral constitution should be looked for in connection with his social relationships, with the action and reaction which take place between man and the brethren of his species. We therefore understand external nature to comprehend in it, not merely all that is external to mind, but all that is external to the individual possessor of a

human mind,—who is surrounded not only by an economy of complex and extended materialism, but who is surrounded by other men and other minds than his own. Without this generalized view of external nature, we should be left in possession of but scanty materials for evincing its adaptation to the moral constitution of man, though an ample field of observation would still lie open to us, in unfolding the aptitude of the human understanding, with its various instincts and powers, for the business of physical investigation. For the purpose then of enhancing our argument, or rather of doing but justice to it, we propose to consider not merely those relations between mind and matter, but those relations between mind and mind, the establishment of which attests a wise and beneficent contrivance. We shall thus be enabled to enter on a department of observation distinct from that of all the other labourers in this joint enterprize,—and while their provinces respectively are to trace the hand of a great and good Designer in the mechanism of the heavens, or the mechanism of the terrestrial physics, or the mechanism of various organic structures in the animal and vegetable kingdoms; it will be part of ours, more especially, to point out the evidences of a forming and presiding, and withal benevolent intelligence in the mechanism of human society.

3. We conceive of external nature then that it

comprehends more than the mute and unconscious materialism, and the objective truth—it comprehends also the living society by which the possessor of a moral and intellectual constitution is surrounded. Did we exclude the latter from our regards, we should be keeping out of view a number of as wise, and certainly, in the degree that mind is of higher consideration than body, of far more beneficial and important adaptations than any which are presented to our notice in the mechanical, or chemical, or physiological departments of creation. Both in the reciprocities of domestic life, and in those wider relations, which bind large assemblages of men into political and economical systems, we shall discern the incontestable marks of a divine wisdom and care; principles or laws of human nature in virtue of which the social economy moves rightly and prosperously onward, and apart from which all would go into derangement; affinities between man and his fellows, that harmonize the individual with the general interests, and are obviously designed as provisions for the well-being both of families and nations.

4. It might help to guard us against a possible misconception, if now, at the outset of our argument, we shall distinguish between the moral constitution of man, and that moral system of doctrine which embodies in it the outer truths or principles of ethical science. The two are as

distinct from each other, as are the objective and subjective in any quarter of contemplation whatever, and ought no more to be confounded than, in optics, the system of visible things with the anatomical structure of the eye. The organ which perceives or apprehends truth is separate in reality, and should be kept separate in thought, from the truth which is apprehended; and thus it is that we should view the moral constitution of man and the moral system of virtue as diverse and distinct from each other. The one belongs to the physiology of the mind, and is collected, like all other experimental truth, by a diligent observation of facts and phenomena. The other, involving, as it does, those questions which relate to the nature of virtue, or to the origin and principles of moral obligation, directs the attention of the mind to another quarter than to its own processes, and presents us with a wholly distinct matter of contemplation. The acts of moral judgment or feeling should not be confounded with the objects of moral judgment or feeling, any more, in fact, than the rules of logic should be confounded with the laws which govern the procedure of the human understanding. The question, "what is virtue?" or "what is that which constitutes virtue?" is one thing. The question, "what is the mental process by which man takes cognizance of virtue?" is another. They are as distinct from each other as are the prin-

ciples of good reasoning from the processes of the reasoning faculty. It is thus that the mental philosophy, whose proper and legitimate province is the physics of the mind, should be kept distinct from logic and ethics, and the philosophy of taste. The question, "what is beautiful in scenery?" or "what is right in character?" or "what is just in argument?" is distinct from the question, "what is the actual and historical procedure of the mind in addressing itself to these respective objects of contemplation?" as distinct, indeed, as the question of "*Quid est*" is from *Quid oportet;*" or as the question of "what is" from "what ought to be."* A sound objective system of ethics may be framed, irrespective of any attention that we give to man's moral constitution. A sound system of logic may be framed, irrespective of any attention that we give to man's intellectual constitution. And on the other hand, however obscure or unsettled these sciences may still be; and more especially, whatever controversies may yet obtain respecting the nature and the elementary principles of virtue,—such not-

* See the Introduction to Sir James Macintosh's Ethical Dissertation. "The purpose of the physical sciences, throughout all their provinces, is to answer the question, "*What is?*" The purpose of the moral sciences is to answer the question, "*What ought to be?*"—It should be well kept in view, that mental philosophy is one province of the physical sciences, and belongs to the first of these two departments, being distinct from moral philosophy, which forms the second of them.

withstanding, may be the palpable and ascertained facts in the nature and history of subjective man, that, both on his mental constitution, and on the adaptation thereto of external nature, there might remain a clear and unquestionable argument for the power, and wisdom, and goodness of God.

5. Having thus referred our argument, not to the constitution of morality in the abstract, but to the constitution of man's moral nature—a concrete and substantive reality, made up of facts that come within the domain of observation; let us now consider how it is that natural theology proceeds with her demonstrations, on other constitutions and other mechanisms in creation, that we may learn from this in what manner we should commence and prosecute our labours, on that very peculiar, we had almost said, untried field of investigation which has been assigned to us.

6. The chief then, or at least the usual subject-matter of the argument for the wisdom and goodness of God, is the obvious adaptation wherewith creation teems, throughout all its borders, of means to a beneficial end. And it is manifest that the argument grows in strength with the number and complexity of these means. The greater the number of independent circumstances which must meet together for the production of a useful result—then, in the actual fact of their

concurrence, is there less of probability for its being the effect of chance, and more of evidence for its being the effect of design. A beneficent combination of three independent elements is not so impressive or so strong an argument for a divinity, as a similar combination of six or ten such elements. And every mathematician, conversant in the doctrine of probabilities, knows how with every addition to the number of these elements, the argument grows in force and intensity, with a rapid and multiple augmentation —till at length, in some of the more intricate and manifold conjunctions, those more particularly having an organic character and structure, could we but trace them to an historical commencement, we should find, on the principles of computation alone, that the argument against their being fortuitous products, and for their being the products of a scheming and skilful artificer, was altogether overpowering.

7. We might apply this consideration to various departments in nature. In astronomy, the independent elements seem but few and simple, which must meet together for the composition of a planetarium. One uniform law of gravitation, with a force of projection impressed by one impulse on each of the bodies, could suffice to account for the revolutions of the planets round the sun, and of the satellites around their primaries, along with the diurnal revolution of

each, and the varying inclinations of the axes to the planes of their respective orbits. Out of such few contingencies, the actual orrery of the heavens has been framed. But in anatomy, to fetch the opposite illustration from another science, what a complex and crowded combination of individual elements must first be effected, ere we obtain the composition of an eye,—for the completion of which mechanism, there must not only be a greater number of separate laws, as of refraction and muscular action and secretion; but a vastly greater number of separate and distinct parts, as the lenses, and the retina, and the optic nerve, and the eye-lid and eye-lashes, and the various muscles wherewith this delicate organ is so curiously beset, and each of which is indispensable to its perfection, or to the right performance of its functions. It is passing marvellous that we should have more intense evidence for a God in the construction of an eye, than in the construction of the mighty planetarium—or that, within less than the compass of a handbreadth, we should find in this lower world a more pregnant and legible inscription of the Divinity, than can be gathered from a broad and magnificent survey of the skies, lighted up though they be, with the glories and the wonders of astronomy.

8. But while nothing can be more obvious than that the proof for design in any of the natural

formations, is the stronger, in proportion to the number of separate and independent elements which have been brought together, and each of which contributes essentially to its usefulness—we have long held it of prime importance to the theistical argument, that clear exhibition should be made of a distinction not generally adverted to, which obtains between one set of these elements and another. We shall illustrate this by a material, ere we apply it to a mental workmanship.

9. There is, then, a difference of great argumentative importance in this whole question, between the Laws of Matter and the Dispositions of Matter. In astronomy, for example, when attending to the mechanism of the planetary system, we should instance at most but two laws—the law of gravitation; and perhaps the law of perseverance, on the part of all bodies, whether in a state of rest or of motion, till interrupted by some external cause. But had we to state the dispositions of matter in the planetary system, we should instance a greater number of particulars. We should describe the arrangement of its various parts, whether in respect to situation, or magnitude, or figure—as the position of a large and luminous mass in the centre, and of the vastly smaller but opaque masses which circulated around it, but at such distances as not to interfere with each other, and of the still

smaller secondary bodies which revolved about the planets: And we should include in this description the impulses in one direction, and nearly in one plane, given to the different moving bodies; and so regulated, as to secure the movement of each, in an orbit of small eccentricity. The dispositions of matter in the planetary system were fixed at the original setting up of the machine. The laws of matter were ordained for the working of the machine. The former, that is the dispositions, make up the frame-work, or what may be termed the apparatus of the system. The latter, that is the laws, uphold the performance of it.

10. Now the tendency of atheistical writers is to reason exclusively on the laws of matter, and to overlook its dispositions. Could all the beauties and benefits of the astronomical system be referred to the single law of gravitation, it would greatly reduce the strength of the argument for a designing cause. La Place, as if to fortify still more the atheism of such a speculation, endeavoured to demonstrate of this law—that, in respect of its being inversely proportional to the square of the distance from the centre, it is an essential property of matter. La Grange had previously established—that but for such a proportion, or by the deviation of a thousandth part from it, the planetary system would go into derangement—or, in other words, that the law,

such as it is, was essential to the stability of the present mundane constitution. La Place would have accredited the law, the unconscious and unintelligent law, that thing according to him of blind necessity, with the whole of this noble and beautiful result—overlooking what La Grange held to be indispensable as concurring elements in his demonstration of it—certain dispositions along with the law—such as the movement of all the planets, first in one direction, second nearly in one plane, and then in nearly circular orbits. We are aware that according to the discoveries, or rather perhaps to the guesses of some later analysts, the three last circumstances might be dispensed with; and yet notwithstanding, the planetary system, its errors still remaining periodical, would in virtue of the single law oscillate around a mean state that should be indestructible and everlasting. Should this come to be a conclusively settled doctrine in the science, it will extenuate, we admit, the argument for a designing cause in the formation of the planetarium. But it will not annihilate that argument—for there do remain certain palpable utilities in the dispositions as well as laws of the planetary system, acknowledged by all the astronomers; such as the vastly superior weight and quantity of matter accumulated in its centre, and the local establishment there of that great fountain of light and heat from which the surrounding worlds

receive throughout the whole of their course an equable dispensation. What a mal-adjustment would it have been, had the luminous and the opaque matter changed places in the firmament; or the planets, by the eccentricity of their orbits, been subject to such vicissitudes of temperature, as would certainly, in our own at least, have entailed destruction both on the animal and vegetable kingdoms.

11. But whatever defect or doubtfulness of evidence there may be in the mechanism of the heavens—this is amply made up for in a more accessible mechanism, near at hand. If either the dispositions of matter in the former mechanism be so few, or the demonstrable results of its single law be so independent of them, that the agency of design rather than of necessity or chance be less manifest than it otherwise would be in the astronomical system; nothing on the other hand can exceed the force and concentration of that proof, which is crowded to so marvellous a degree of enhancement within the limits of the anatomical system. It is this which enables us to draw so much weightier an argument for a God, from the construction of an eye than from the construction of a planetarium. And here it is quite palpable, that it is in the dispositions of matter more than in the laws of matter, where the main strength of the argument lies, though we hear much more of the wisdom of

Nature's laws, than of the wisdom of her collocations.* Now it is true that the law of refraction is indispensable to the faculty of vision; but the laws indispensable to this result are greatly outnumbered by the dispositions which are indispensable to it—such as the rightly sized and shaped lenses of the eye; and the rightly placed retina spread out behind them, and at the precise distance where the indispensable picture of external nature might be formed, and presented as it were for the information of the occupier within; and then, the variety and proper situation of the numerous muscles, each entrusted with an import-

* This distinction between the laws and collocations of matter is overlooked by atheistical writers, as in the following specimen from the "Systême de la Nature" of Mirabaud. "These prejudiced dreamers," speaking of believers in a God, "are in an extacy at the sight of the periodical motion of the planets; at the order of the stars; at the various productions of the earth; at the astonishing harmony in the component parts of animals. In that moment however, they forget the laws of motion; the power of gravitation; the forces of attraction and repulsion; they assign all these striking phenomena to unknown causes, of which they have no one substantive idea."

When Professor Robison felt alarmed by the attempted demonstration of La Place, that the law of gravitation was an essential property of matter, lest the cause of natural theology should be endangered by it—he might have recollected that the main evidence for a Divinity lies not in the laws of matter, but in their collocations—because of the utter inadequacy in the existing laws to have originated the existing collocations of the material world. So that if ever a time was, when these collocations were not—there is no virtue in the laws that can account for their commencement, or that supersedes the fiat of a God.

ant function, and all of them contributing to the power and perfection of this curious and manifoldly complicated organ. It is not so much the endowment of matter with certain properties, as the arrangement of it into certain parts, that bespeaks here the hand of an artist; and this will be found true of the anatomical structure in all its departments. It is not the mere chemical property of the gastric juice that impresses the belief of contrivance; but the presence of the gastric juice, in the very situation whence it comes forth to act with advantage on the food, when received into the stomach, and there submitted to a digestive process for the nourishment of the animal economy. It is well to distinguish these two things. If we but say of matter that it is furnished with such powers as make it subservient to many useful results, we keep back the strongest and most unassailable part of the argument for a God. It is greatly more pertinent and convincing to say of matter, that it is distributed into such parts as to ensure a right direction and a beneficial application for its powers. It is not so much in the establishment of certain laws for matter, that we discern the aims or the purposes of intelligence, as in certain dispositions of matter, that put it in the way of being usefully operated upon by the laws. Insomuch, that though we conceded to the atheist, the eternity of matter, and the essentially inherent

character of all its laws—we could still point out to him, in the manifold adjustments of matter, its adjustments of place, and figure, and magnitude, the most impressive signatures of a Deity. And what a countless variety of such adjustments within the compass of an animal, or even a vegetable frame-work. In particular, what an amount and condensation of evidence for a God in the workmanship of the human body. What bright and convincing lessons of theology might man (would he but open his eyes) read on his own person—that microcosm of divine art, where as in the sentences of a perfect epitome, he might trace in every lineament or member the finger and authorship of the Godhead.

12. In the performances of human art, the argument for design that is grounded on the useful dispositions of matter, stands completely disentangled from the argument that is grounded on the useful laws of matter—for in every implement or piece of mechanism constructed by the hands of man, it is in the latter apart from the former, that the indications of contrivance wholly and exclusively lie. We do not accredit man with the establishment of any laws for matter—yet he leaves enough by which to trace the operations of his intelligence in the collocations of matter. He does not give to matter any of its properties; but he arranges it into parts—and by such arrangement alone, does he impress

upon his workmanship the incontestable marks of design; not in that he has communicated any powers to matter, but in that he has intelligently availed himself of these powers, and directed them to an obviously beneficial result. The watchmaker did not give its elasticity to the main-spring, nor its regularity to the balance-wheel, nor its transparency to the glass, nor the momentum of its varying forces to the levers of his mechanism,—yet is the whole replete with the marks of intelligence notwithstanding, announcing throughout the hand of a maker who had an eye on all these properties, and assigned the right place and adjustment to each of them, in fashioning and bringing together the parts of an instrument for the measurement and the indication of time. Now, the same distinction can be observed in all the specimens of natural mechanism. It is true that we accredit the author of these with the creation and laws of matter, as well as its dispositions; but this does not hinder its being in the latter and not in the former, where the manifestations of skill are most apparent, or where the chief argument for a divinity lies. The truth is, that mere laws, without collocations, would have afforded no security against a turbid and disorderly chaos. One can imagine of all the substantive things which enter into the composition of a watch, that they may have been huddled together, without shape, and

without collocation, into a little chaos, or confused medley;—where, in full possession of all the properties which belong to the matter of the instrument, but without its dispositions, every evidence of skill would have been wholly obliterated. And it is even so with all the substantive things which enter into the composition of a world. Take but their forms and collocations away from them, and this goodly universe would instantly lapse into a heaving and disorderly chaos—yet without stripping matter of any of its properties or powers. There might still, though operating with random and undirected activity, be the laws of impulse, and gravitation, and magnetism, and temperature, and light, and the forces of chemistry, and even those physiological tendencies, which, however abortive in a state of primitive rudeness, or before the spirit of a God moved on the face of the waters, waited but a right distribution of the parts of matter, to develope into the full effect and establishment of animal and vegetable kingdoms. The thing wanted for the evolution of this chaos into an orderly and beneficial system is not the endowing of matter with right properties; but the forming of it into things of right shape and magnitude, and the marshalling of these into right places. This last alone would suffice for bringing harmony out of confusion; and, apart altogether from the first, or, without involving our-

selves in the metaphysical obscurity of those questions which relate to the origination of matter and to the distinction between its arbitrary and essential properties, might we discern, in the mere arrangements of matter, the most obvious and decisive signatures of the artist hand which has been employed on it.

13. That is a fine generalization by the late Professor Robison, of Edinburgh, which ranges all philosophy into two sciences—one the science of contemporaneous nature; the other, the science of successive nature. When the material world is viewed according to this distinction, the whole science of its contemporaneous phenomena is comprehended by him under the general name of Natural History, which takes cognizance of all those characters in external nature that exist together at the instant, and which may be described without reference to time—as smell, and colour, and size, and weight, and form, and relation of parts, whether of the simple inorganic or more complex organic structures. But when the elements of time and motion are introduced, we are then presented with the phenomena of successive nature; and the science that embraces these is, in contradistinction to the former, termed Natural Philosophy. This latter science may be separated or subdivided further into natural philosophy, strictly and indeed usually so called, whose province it is to investigate those changes

which take effect in bodies by motions that are sensible and measurable; and chemistry, or the science of those changes which take effect in bodies by motions which are not sensible or, at least, not measurable, and which cannot therefore be made the subjects of mathematical computation or reasoning. This last, again, is capable of being still further partitioned into the science which investigates the changes effected by means of insensible motion in all inorganic matter, or chemistry strictly and usually so called; and the science of physiology, whose province it is to investigate the like changes that take place in organic bodies, whether of the animal or vegetable kingdoms.

14. Or, the distinction between these two sciences of contemporaneous and successive nature may otherwise be stated thus. The one, or natural history, is conversant with objects—the other, or natural philosophy in its most comprehensive meaning, is conversant with events. It is obvious that the dispositions of matter come within the province of the former science—while the laws of matter, or the various moving forces by which it is actuated, fall more properly under the enquiries of the latter science. Now, adopting this nomenclature, we hold it a most important assertion for the cause of natural theology, that should all the present arrangements of our existing natural history be destroyed, there is no

power in the laws of our existing natural philosophy to replace them. Or, in other words, if ever a time was, when the structure and dispositions of matter, under the present economy of things were not—there is no force known in nature, and no combination of forces that can account for their commencement. The laws of nature may keep up the working of the machinery—but they did not and could not set up the machine. The human species, for example, may be upholden, through an indefinite series of ages, by the established law of transmission—but were the species destroyed, there are no observed powers of nature by which it could again be originated. For the continuance of the system and of all its operations, we might imagine a sufficiency in the laws of nature; but it is the first construction of the system which so palpably calls for the intervention of an artificer, or demonstrates so powerfully the fiat and finger of a God.

15. This distinction between nature's laws and nature's collocations is mainly lost sight of in those speculations of geology, the object of which is to explain the formation of new systems emerging from the wreck of old ones. They proceed on the sufficiency of nature's laws for building up the present economy of things out of the ruins of a former economy, which the last great physical catastrophe on the face of our earth had over-

thrown. Now, in these ruins, viewed as materials for the architecture of a renovated world, there did reside all those forces, by which the processes of the existing economy are upholden; but the geologists assign to them a function wholly distinct from this, when they labour to demonstrate that by laws, and laws alone, the frame-work of our existing economy was put together. It is thus that they would exclude the agency of a God from the transition between one system, or one formation, and another, although it be precisely at such transition when this agency seems most palpably and peculiarly called for. We feel assured that the necessity for a divine intervention, and, of course, the evidence of it would have been more manifest, had the distinction between the laws of matter and its collocations been more formally announced, or more fully proceeded on by the writers on natural theism. And yet it is a distinction that must have been present to the mind of our great Newton, who expressly affirms that a mechanism of wonderful structure could not arise by the mere laws of nature. In his third printed letter to Bentley, he says, that "the growth of *new systems* out of *old ones*, without the mediation of a divine power, seems to me apparently absurd;" and that "the system of nature was *set in order* in the beginning, with respect to size, figure, proportions, and properties, by the counsels of

God's own intelligence." In the last extracts, by his admission of the properties along with the dispositions of matter, he somewhat confounds or disguises again the important distinction which, at times, he had clearly in his view.*

16. But one precious fruit of the recent geological discoveries may be gathered from the testimony which they afford to the destruction of so many terrestrial economies now gone by, and the substitution of the existing one in their place. If there be truth at all in the speculations of this science, there is nothing which appears to have been more conclusively established by them, than a definite origin or commencement for the present animal and vegetable races. Now we know what it is which upholds the whole of the physiological system that is now before our eyes,—even the successive derivation of each individual member from a

* Towards the end of the third book of Newton's Optics, we have the following very distinct testimony upon this subject: "For it became Him who created them to set them in order. And if he did so, it is unphilosophical to seek for any other origin of the world, or to pretend that it might arise out of a chaos by the mere laws of nature; though being once formed, it may continue by those laws for many ages."

This disposition to resolve the collocations into the laws of nature proves, in the expressive language of Granville Penn, how strenuously, not "physical science, but only some of its disciples have laboured to exclude the *Creator* from the *details* of his own creation; straining every nerve of ingenuity to ascribe them *all* to *secondary causes*."

parent of its own likeness; but we see no force in nature, and no complication of forces which can tell us what it was that originated the system. It is at this passage in the history of nature, where we meet with such pregnant evidence for the interposition of a designing cause,—an evidence, it will be seen, of prodigious density and force, when we compute the immense number and variety of those aptitudes, whether of form or magnitude or relative position, which enter into the completion of an organic structure. It is in the numerical superiority of the distinct collocations to the distinct laws of matter, that the superior evidence of the former lies. We do not deny that there is argument for a God in the number of beneficial, while, at the same time, distinct and independent laws wherewith matter is endowed. We only affirm a million-fold intensity of argument, in the indefinitely greater number of beneficial, and at the same time distinct and independent number of collocations whereinto matter has been arranged. In this respect the human body may be said to present a more close and crowded and multifarious inscription of the divinity, than any single object within the compass of visible nature. It is instinct throughout with the evidence of a builder's hand; and thus the appropriate men of science who can expound those dispositions of matter which constitute the anatomy of its frame-work,

and which embrace the physiology of its various processes, are on secure and firm vantage ground for an impressive demonstration.

17. Now there are many respects in which the evidence for a God, given forth by the constitution of the human body, differs from the evidence given forth by the constitution of the human spirit. It is with the latter evidence that we have more peculiarly to deal; but at present we shall only advert to a few of its distinct and special characteristics. The subject will at length open into greater detail, and developement before us,—yet a brief preliminary exposition may be useful at the outset, should it only convey some notion of the difficulties and particularities of the task which has been put into our hands.

18. A leading distinction between the material and the mental fabrications is, the far greater complexity of the former, at least greater to all human observation. Into that system of means which has been formed for the object of seeing, there enter at least twenty separate contingencies, the absence of any one of which would either derange the proper function of the eye, or altogether destroy it. We have no access to aught like the observation of a mental structure, and all of which our consciousness informs us is a succession of mental phenomena. Now in these we are sensible of nothing but a very simple antecedent followed up, and that generally on the instant,

by a like simple consequent. We have the feeling and still more the purpose of benevolence, followed up by complacency. We have the feeling or purpose, and still more the execution of malignity, or rather the recollection of that execution, followed up by remorse. However manifold the apparatus may be which enables us to see an external object,—when the sight itself, instead of the consequent in a material succession, becomes the antecedent in a mental one; or, in other words, when it passes from a material to a purely mental process; then, as soon, does it pass from the complex into the simple; and, accordingly, the sight of distress is followed up, without the intervention of any curiously elaborated mechanism that we are at all conscious of, by an immediate feeling of compassion. These examples will, at least, suffice to mark a strong distinction between the two enquiries, and to show that the several arguments drawn from each must at least be formed of very different materials.

19. There are two distinct ways in which the mind can be viewed, and which constitute different modes of conception, rather than diversities of substantial and scientific doctrine. The mind may either be regarded as a congeries of different faculties; or as a simple and indivisible substance, with the susceptibility of passing into different states. By the former mode of viewing it, the memory, and the judgment, and the con-

science, and the will, are conceived of as so many distinct but co-existent parts of mind, which is thus represented to us somewhat in the light of an organic structure, having separate members, each for the discharge of its own appropriate mental function or exercise. By the latter, which we deem also the more felicitous mode of viewing it, these distinct mental acts, instead of being referred to distinct parts of the mind, are conceived of as distinct acts of the whole mind,—insomuch that the whole mind remembers, or the whole mind judges, or the whole mind wills, or, in short, the whole mind passes into various intellectual states or states of emotion, according to the circumstances by which at the time it is beset, or to the present nature of its employment. We might thus either regard the study of mind as a study in contemporaneous nature; and we should then, in the delineation of its various parts, be assigning to it a natural history,—or we might regard the study of mind as a study in successive nature; and we should then, in the description of its various states, be assigning to it a natural philosophy. When such a phrase as the anatomy of the human mind is employed by philosophers, we may safely guess that the former is the conception which they are inclined to form of it.* When such a phrase again as the phy-

* It is under this conception too that writers propose to lay down a map of the human faculties.

siology of the human mind is made use of, the latter is the conception by which, in all probability, it has been suggested. It is thus that Dr. Thomas Brown designates the science of mind as mental physiology. With him, in fact, it is altogether a science of sequences, his very analysis being the analysis of results, and not of compounds.

20. Now, in either view of our mental constitution there is the same strength of evidence for a God. It matters not for this, whether the mind be regarded as consisting of so many useful parts, or as endowed with as many useful properties. It is the number, whether the one or other, of these—out of which the product is formed of evidence for a designing cause. The only reason why the useful dispositions of matter are so greatly more prolific of this evidence than the useful laws of matter, is, that the former so greatly outnumber the latter. Of the twenty independent circumstances which enter into beneficial concurrence in the formation of an eye, that each of them should be found in a situation of optimism, and none of them occupying either an indifferent or a hurtful position—it is this which speaks so emphatically against the hypothesis of a random distribution, and for the hypothesis of an intelligent order. Yet this is but one out of the many like specimens, wherewith the animal economy thickens and teems in such marvellous

profusion. By the doctrine of probabilities, the mathematical evidence, in this question between the two suppositions of intelligence or chance, will be found, even on many a single organ of the human frame-work, to preponderate vastly more than a million-fold on the side of the former. We do not affirm of the human mind that it is so destitute of all complication and variety, as to be deficient altogether in this sort of evidence. Let there be but six laws or ultimate facts in the mental constitution, with the circumstance of each of them being beneficial; and this of itself would yield no inconsiderable amount of precise and calculable proof, for our mental economy being a formation of contrivance, rather than one that is fortuitous or of blind necessity. It will at once be seen, however, why mind, just from its greater simplicity than matter, should contribute so much less to the support of natural theism, of that definite and mathematical evidence which is founded on combination.

21. But, although in the mental department of creation, the argument for a God that is gathered out of such materials, is not so strong as in the other great department—yet it does furnish a peculiar argument of its own, which, though not grounded on mathematical data, and not derived from a lengthened and logical process of reasoning, is of a highly effective and practical character notwithstanding. It has not less in it of the

substance, though it may have greatly less in it of the semblance of demonstration, that it consists of but one step between the premises and the conclusion. It is briefly, but cannot be more clearly and emphatically expressed than in the following sentence.—"He that formed the eye, shall he not see? He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? He that teacheth man knowledge, shall he not know?" That the parent cause of intelligent beings shall be itself intelligent is an aphorism, which, if not demonstrable in the forms of logic, carries in the very announcement of it a challenging power over the acquiescence of almost all spirits. It is a thing of instant conviction, as if seen in the light of its own evidence, more than a thing of lengthened and laborious proof. It may be stigmatized as a mere impression—nevertheless the most of intellects go as readily along with it, as they would from one *contiguous* step to another of many a stately argumentation. If it cannot be exhibited as the conclusion of a syllogism, it is because of its own inherent right to be admitted there as the major proposition. To proscribe every such truth, or to disown it from being truth, merely because incapable of deduction, would be to cast away the first principles of all reasoning. It would banish the authority of intuition, and so reduce all philosophy and knowledge to a state of universal scepticism—for what is the first departure

of every argument but an intuition, and what but a series of intuitions are its successive stepping-stones? We should soon involve ourselves in helpless perplexity and darkness, did we insist on every thing being proved and on nothing being assumed—for valid assumptions are the materials of truth, and the only office of argument is to weave them together into so many pieces of instruction for the bettering or enlightening of the species.

22. That blind and unconscious matter cannot, by any of her combinations, evolve the phenomena of mind, is a proposition seen in its own immediate light, and felt to be true with all the speed and certainty of an axiom. It is to such truth, as being of instant and almost universal consent, that, more than to any other, we owe the existence of a natural theology among men: yet, because of the occult mysticism wherewith it is charged, it is well that ours is a cause of such rich and various argument; that in her service we can build up syllogisms, and expatiate over wide fields of induction, and amass stores of evidence, and, on the useful dispositions of matter alone, can ground such large computations of probability in favor of an intelligent cause or maker for all things, as might silence and satisfy the reasoners.

23. But we forget that the object of the joint compositions which enter into this work, is not

properly to demonstrate the being but the attributes of God, and more especially His power, and wisdom, and goodness. We start from that point at which the intuitions and proofs of the question have performed their end of convincing man that God is; and from this point, we set forth on an enquiry into the character which belongs to him. Now this is an enquiry which the constitution of the mind, and the adaptation of that constitution to the external world, are pre-eminently fitted to illustrate. We hold that the material universe affords decisive attestation to the natural perfections of the Godhead, but that it leaves the question of his moral perfections involved in profoundest mystery. The machinery of a serpent's tooth, for the obvious infliction of pain and death upon its victims, may speak as distinctly for the power and intelligence of its Maker as the machinery of those teeth which, formed and inserted for simple mastication, subserve the purposes of a bland and beneficent economy. An apparatus of suffering and torture might furnish as clear an indication of design, though a design of cruelty, as does an apparatus for the ministration of enjoyment furnish the indication also of design, but a design of benevolence. Did we confine our study to the material constitution of things, we should meet with the enigma of many perplexing and contradictory appearances. We hope

to make it manifest, that in the study of the mental constitution, this enigma is greatly alleviated, if not wholly done away; and, at all events, that within our peculiar province there lie the most full and unambiguous demonstrations, which nature hath any where given to us, both of the benevolence and the righteousness of God.

24. If, in some respects, the phenomena of mind tell us less decisively than the phenomena of matter, of the existence of God, they tell us far more distinctly and decisively of His attributes. We have already said that, from the simplicity of the mental system, we met with less there of that evidence for design which is founded on combination, or on that right adjustment and adaptation of the numerous particulars, which enter into a complex assemblage of things, and which are essential to some desirable fulfilment. It is not, therefore, through the medium of this particular evidence—the evidence which lies in combination; that the phenomena and processes of mind are the best for telling us of the Divine existence. But if otherwise, or previously told of this, we hold them to be the best throughout all nature for telling us of the Divine character. For if once convinced, on distinct grounds, that God is, it matters not how simple the antecedents or the consequents of any particular succession may be. It is enough that we know

what the terms of the succession are, or what the effect is wherewith God wills any given thing to be followed up. The character of the ordination, and so the character of the ordainer, depends on the terms of the succession; and not on the nature of that intervention or agency, whether more or less complex, by which it is brought about. And should either term of the succession, either the antecedent or consequent, be some moral feeling, or characteristic of the mind, then the inference comes to be a very distinct and decisive one. That the sight of distress, for example, should be followed up by compassion, is an obvious provision of benevolence, and not of cruelty, on the part of Him who ordained our mental constitution. Again, that a feeling of kindness in the heart should be followed up by a feeling of complacency in the heart, that in every virtuous affection of the soul there should be so much to gladden and harmonize it, that there should always be peace within when there is conscious purity or rectitude within; and, on the other hand, that malignity and licentiousness, and the sense of any moral transgression whatever, should always have the effect of discomforting, and sometimes even of agonizing the spirit of man—that such should be the actual workmanship and working of our nature, speaks most distinctly, we apprehend, for the general righteousness of Him who

constructed its machinery and established its laws. An omnipotent patron of vice would have given another make, and a moral system with other and opposite tendencies to the creatures whom he had formed. He would have established different sequences; and, instead of that oil of gladness which now distils, as if from a secret spring of satisfaction, upon the upright; and, instead of that bitterness and disquietude which are now the obvious attendants on every species of delinquency, we should have had the reverse phenomena of a reversely constituted species, whose minds were in their state of wildest disorder when kindling with the resolves of highest excellence; or were in their best and happiest, and most harmonious mood, when brooding over the purposes of dishonesty, or frenzied with the passions of hatred and revenge.

25. In this special track of observation, we have at least the means or data for constructing a far more satisfactory demonstration of the divine attributes, than can possibly be gathered, we think, from the ambiguous phenomena of the external world. In other words, it will be found that the mental phenomena speak more distinctly and decisively for the character of God than do the material phenomena of creation. And it should not be forgotten that whatever serves to indicate the character, serves also to confirm the existence of the Divine Being. For

this character, whose signatures are impressed on Nature, is not an abstraction, but must have residence on a concrete and substantive Being, who hath communicated a transcript of Himself to the workmanship of His own hands. It is thus, that, although in our assigned department there is greater poverty of evidence for a God, in as far as that evidence is grounded on a skilful disposition of parts,—yet, in respect of another kind of evidence, there is no such poverty; for, greatly more replete as we hold our special department to be with the unequivocal tokens of a moral character, we, by that simple but strong ligament of proof which connects a character with an existence, can, in the study of mind alone, find a firm stepping-stone to the existence of a God. Our universe is sometimes termed the mirror of Him who made it. But the optical reflection, whatever it may be, must be held as indicating the reality which gave it birth; and, whether we discern there the expression of a reigning benevolence, or a reigning justice, these must not be dealt with as the aerial or the fanciful personifications of qualities alone, but as the substantial evidences of a just and benevolent, and, withal, a living God.

26. But, in the prosecution of our assigned task, we shall, after all, meet with much of that evidence, which lies in the manifold, and, withal, happy conjunction of many individual things,

by the meeting together of which, some distinctly beneficial end is accomplished, brought about in that one way and in no other. For it ought further to be recollected, that, simple as the constitution of the human mind is, and proportionally unfruitful, therefore, as it may be of that argument for a God, which is founded on the right assortment and disposition of many parts, or even of many principles; yet, on studying the precise terms of the commission which has been put into our hands, it will be found that the materials even of this peculiar argument lie abundantly within our province. For it is not strictly the mental constitution of man which forms the subject of our prescribed essay, but the adaptation to that constitution of external nature. We have to demonstrate, not so much that the mind is rightly constituted in itself, as that the mind is rightly placed in a befitting theatre for the exercise of its powers. It is to demonstrate that the world and its various objects are suited to the various capacities of this inhabitant—this moral and intelligent creature, of whom we have to prove that the things which are around him bear a fit relation to the laws or the properties which are within him. There is ample room here for the evidence of collocation. Yet there remains this distinction between the mental and the corporeal economy of man, that whereas the evidence is more rich and manifold

in the bodily structure itself, than even in its complex and numerous adaptations to the outer world ;* the like evidence, in our peculiar department, is meagre, as afforded by the subjective mind, when compared with the evidence of its various adjustments and fitnesses to the objective universe around it, whether of man's moral constitution to the state of human society, or of his intellectual to the various objects of physical investigation.

27. The great object of philosophy is to ascertain the simple or ultimate principles, into which all the phenomena of nature may by analysis be resolved. But it often happens that in this attempt she stops short at a secondary law, which might be demonstrated by further analysis to be itself a complex derivative of the primitive or elementary laws. Until this work of analysis be completed, we shall often mistake what is compound for what is simple, both in the philosophy of mind and the philosophy of matter—being frequently exposed to intractable substances or intractable phenomena in both, which long withstand every effort that science makes for their decomposition. It is thus that the time is not yet come, and may never come, when we

* Yet Paley has a most interesting chapter on the adaptations of external nature to the human frame-work, though the main strength and copiousness of his argument lie in the anatomy of the frame-work itself.

shall fully understand, what be all the simple elements or simple laws of matter; and what be all the distinct elementary laws, or, as they have sometimes been termed, the ultimate facts in the constitution of the human mind. But we do not need to wait for this communication, ere we can trace, in either department, the wisdom and beneficence of a Deity—for many are both the material and the mental processes which might be recognized as pregnant with utility, and so, pregnant with evidence for a God, long before the processes themselves are analyzed. The truth is, that a secondary law, if it do not exhibit any additional proof of design, in a distinct useful principle, exhibits that proof in a distinct and useful disposition of parts—for, generally speaking, a secondary law is the result of an operation by some primitive law, in peculiar and new circumstances. For example, the law of the tides is a secondary law, resolvable into one more general and elementary—even the law of gravitation. But we might imagine a state of things, in which the discovery of this connection would have been impossible,—as a sky perpetually mantled with a cloudy evelopement, which, while it did not intercept the light either of the sun or moon, still hid these bodies from our direct observation. In these circumstances, the law of the tides and the law of gravitation, though identical in themselves, could not have been identified by us;

and so, we might have ascribed this wholesome agitation of the sea, and of the atmosphere to a distinct power or principle in nature—affording the distinct indication of both a kind and intelligent Creator. Now this inference is not annihilated—it is not even enfeebled by the discovery in question; for although the good arising from tides in the ocean and tides in the air, is not referable to a peculiar law—it is at least referable to a peculiar collocation. And this holds of all the useful secondary laws in the material world. If they cannot be alleged in evidence for the number of beneficial principles in nature—they can at least be alleged in evidence for the number of nature's beneficial arrangements. If they do not attest the multitude of useful properties, they at the least attest the multitude of useful parts in nature; and the skill, guided by benevolence which has been put forth in the distribution of them. So that long ere the philosophy of matter is perfected, or all its phenomena and its secondary laws have been resolved into their original and constituent principles—may we, in their obvious and immediate utility alone, detect as many separate evidences in nature as there are separate facts in nature, for a wise and benevolent Deity.

28. And the same will be found true of the secondary laws in the mental world, which, if not as many distinct beneficial principles in the

constitution of the mind, are the effect of as many distinct and beneficial arrangements in the objects or circumstances by which it is surrounded. We have not to wait the completion of its still more subtle and difficult analysis, ere we come within sight of those varied indications of benevolent design which are so abundantly to be met with, both in the constitution of the mind itself, and in the adaptation thereto of external nature. Some there are, for example, who contend that the laws of taste are not primitive but secondary; that our admiration of beauty in material objects is resolvable into other and original emotions, and, more especially, by means of the associating principle, into our admiration of moral excellence. Let the justness of this doctrine be admitted; and its only effect on our peculiar argument is, that the benevolence of God in thus multiplying our enjoyments, instead of being indicated by a distinct law for suiting the human mind to the objects which surround it, is indicated both by the distribution of these objects and by their investment with such qualities as suit them to the previous constitution of the mind—that he hath pencilled them with the very colours, or moulded them into the very shapes which suggest either the graceful or the noble of human character; that he hath imparted to the violet its hue of modesty, and clothed the lily in its robe

of purest innocence, and given to the trees of the forest their respective attitudes of strength or delicacy, and made the whole face of nature one bright reflection of those virtues which the mind and character of man had originally radiated. If it be not by the implantation of a peculiar law in mind, it is at least by a peculiar disposition of tints and forms in external nature, that he hath spread so diversified a loveliness over the panorama of visible things; and thrown so many walks of enchantment around us; and turned the sights and the sounds of rural scenery into the ministers of so much and such exquisite enjoyment; and caused the outer world of matter to image forth in such profusion those various qualities, which at first had pleased or powerfully affected us in the inner world of consciousness and thought. It is by the modifying operation of circumstances that a primary is transmuted into a secondary law; and if the blessings which we enjoy under it cannot be ascribed to the insertion of a distinct principle in the nature of man, they can at least be ascribed to a useful disposition of circumstances in the theatre around him.

29. It is thus that philosophical discovery, which is felt by many to enfeeble the argument for a God, when it reduces two or more subordinate to simpler and anterior laws, does in fact leave that argument as entire as before—for if,

by analysis, it diminish the number of beneficial properties in matter, it replaces the injury which it may be supposed to have done in this way to the cause of theism, by presenting us with as great an additional number of beneficial arrangements in nature. And further, it may not be out of place to observe, that there appear to be two distinct ways by which an artificer might make manifest the wisdom of his contrivances. He may either be conceived of, as forming a substance and endowing it with the fit properties; or as finding a substance with certain given properties, and arranging it into fit dispositions for the accomplishment of some desirable end. Both the former and the latter of these we ascribe to the divine artificer—of whom we imagine, that He is the Creator as well as the Disposer of all things. It is only the latter that we can ascribe to the human artificer, who creates no substance, and ordains no property; but finds the substance with all its properties ready made and put into his hands, as the raw material out of which he fashions his implements and rears his structures of various design and workmanship. Now it is a commonly received, and has indeed been raised into a sort of universal maxim, that the highest property of wisdom is to achieve the most desirable end, or the greatest amount of good, by the fewest possible means, or by the simplest machinery. When this test is applied to the laws of

nature—then we esteem it, as enhancing the manifestation of intelligence, that one single law, as gravitation, should, as from a central and commanding eminence, subordinate to itself a whole host of most important phenomena; or that from one great and parent property, so vast a family of beneficial consequences should spring. And when the same test is applied to the dispositions, whether of nature or art—then it enhances the manifestation of wisdom, when some great end is brought about with a less complex or cumbersome instrumentality, as often takes place in the simplification of machines, when, by the device of some ingenious ligament or wheel, the apparatus is made equally, perhaps more effective, whilst less unwieldy or less intricate than before. Yet there is one way in which, along with an exceeding complication in the mechanism, there might be given the impression, of the very highest skill and capacity having been put forth on the contrivance of it. It is when, by means of a very operose and complex instrumentality, the triumph of art has been made all the more conspicuous, by a very marvellous result having been obtained out of very unpromising materials. It is true, that, in this case too, a still higher impression of skill would be given, if the same or a more striking result were arrived at, even after the intricacy of the machine had been reduced, by some happy device, in virtue of which, certain

of its parts or circumvolutions had been superseded; and thus, without injury to the final effect, so much of the complication had been dispensed with. Still, however, the substance, whether of the machine or the manufacture, may be conceived so very intractable as to put an absolute limit on any further simplification, or as to create an absolute necessity for all the manifold contrivance which had been expended on it. When this idea predominates in the mind —then all the complexity which we may behold does not reduce our admiration of the artist, but rather deepens the sense that we have, both of the reconditeness of his wisdom, and of the wondrous vastness and variety of his resources. It is the extreme wideness of the contrast, between the sluggishness of matter and the fineness of the results in physiology, which so enhances our veneration for the great Architect of Nature, when we behold the exquisite organizations of the animal and vegetable kingdoms.* The two exhibitions are wholly distinct from each other—yet each of them may be perfect in its own way. The first is held forth to us, when one law of pervading generality is found to scatter a myriad of beneficent consequences in its train. The second is held forth, when, by an infinite com-

* Dr. Paley would state the problem thus. The laws of matter being given, so to organize it, as that it shall produce or sustain the phenomena, whether of vegetation or of life.

plexity of means, a countless variety of expedients with their multiform combinations, some one design, such as the upholding of life in plants or animals is accomplished. Creation presents us in marvellous profusion with specimens of both these—at once confirming the doctrine, and illustrating the significancy of the expression in which Scripture hath conveyed it to us, when it tells of the *manifold* wisdom of God.

30. But while, on a principle already often recognised, this multitude of necessary conditions to the accomplishment of a given end, enhances the argument for a God, because each separate condition reduces the hypothesis of chance to a more violent improbability than before; yet it must not be disguised that there is a certain transcendental mystery which it has the effect of aggravating, and which it leaves unresolved. We can understand the complex machinery and the circuitous processes to which a human artist must resort, that he might overcome the else uncomplying obstinacy of inert matter, and bend it in subserviency to his special designs. But that the Divine artist who first created the matter and ordained its laws, should find the same complication necessary for the accomplishment of his purposes; that such an elaborate workmanship, for example, should be required to establish the functions of sight and hearing in the animal economy,

is very like the lavish or ostensible ingenuity of a Being employed in conquering the difficulty which himself had raised. It is true, the one immediate purpose is served by it which we have just noticed,—that of presenting, as it were, to the eye of enquirers a more manifold inscription of the Divinity. But if, instead of being the object of inference, it had pleased God to make himself the object of a direct manifestation, then for the mere purpose of becoming known to his creatures, this reflex or circuitous method of revelation would have been altogether uncalled for. That under the actual system of creation, and with its actual proofs, he has made his existence most decisively known to us, we most thankfully admit. But when question is made between the actual and the conceivable systems of creation which God might have emanated, we are forced to confess, that the very circumstances which, in the existing order of things, have brightened and enhanced the evidence of His being, have also cast a deeper secrecy over what may be termed the general policy of His government and ways. And this is but one of the many difficulties, which men of unbridled speculation and unobservant of that sound philosophy that keeps within the limits of human observation, will find it abundantly possible to conjure up on the field of natural theism. It does look an impracticable

enigma that the Omnipotent God, who could have grafted all the capacities of thought and feeling on an elementary atom, should have deemed fit to incorporate the human soul in the midst of so curious and complicated a frame-work. For what a variegated structure is man's animal economy. What an apparatus of vessels and bones and ligaments. What a complex mechanism. What an elaborate chemistry. What a multitude of parts in the anatomy, and of processes in the physiology of this marvellous system. What a medley, we had almost said, what a package of contents. What an unwearied play of secretions and circulations and other changes incessant and innumerable. In short, what a laborious complication; and all to uphold a living principle, which, one might think, could by a simple fiat of omnipotence, have sprung forth at once from the great source and centre of the spiritual system, and mingled with the world of spirits—just as each new particle of light is sent forth by the emanation of a sunbeam, to play and glisten among fields of radiance.

31. But to recall ourselves from this digression among the possibilities of what might have been, to the realities of the mental system, such as it actually is. Ere we bring the very general observations of this chapter to a close, we would briefly notice an analogy between the realities of the mental and those of the corporeal system.

The enquirers into the latter have found it of substantial benefit to their science, to have mixed up with the prosecution of it a reference to final causes. Their reasoning on the likely uses of a part in anatomy, has, in some instances, suggested or served as a guide to speculations, which have been at length verified by a discovery. We believe, in like manner, that reasoning on the likely or obvious uses of a principle in the constitution of the human mind, might lead, if not to the discovery, at least to the confirmation of important truth—not perhaps in the science itself, but in certain of the cognate sciences which stand in no very distant relation to it. For example, we think it should rectify certain errors which have been committed both in jurisprudence and political economy, if it can be demonstrated that some of the undoubted laws of human nature are traversed by them; and so, that violence is thereby done to the obvious designs of the Author of Nature. We shall not hold it out of place, though we notice one or two of these instances, by which it might be seen that the mental philosophy, when studied in connection with the palpable views of Him by whom all its principles and processes were ordained, is fitted to enlighten the practice of legislation, and more especially to determine the wisdom of certain arrangements which have

for their object the economic well-being of society.

32. We feel the arduousness of our peculiar task; and the feeling is not at all alleviated by our sense of its surpassing dignity. The superiority of mind to matter has often been the theme of eloquence to moralists. For what were all the wonders of the latter and all its glories, without a spectator mind that could intelligently view and that could tastefully admire them? Let every eye be irrevocably closed, and this were equivalent to the entire annihilation in nature of the element of light; and in like manner, if the light of all consciousness were put out in the world of mind, the world of matter, though as rich in beauty, and in the means of benevolence as before, were thereby reduced to a virtual nonentity. In these circumstances, the lighting up again of even but one mind would restore its being, or at least its significancy, to that system of materialism, which, untouched itself, had just been desolated of all those beings in whom it could kindle reflection, or to whom it could minister the sense of enjoyment. It were tantamount to the second creation of it,—or, in other words, one living intelligent spirit is of higher reckoning and mightier import than a dead universe.

PART I.

ON THE ADAPTATION OF EXTERNAL NATURE TO THE MORAL CONSTITUTION OF MAN.

CHAPTER I.

On the Supremacy of Conscience.

1. AN abstract question in morals is distinct from a question respecting the constitution of man's moral nature; and the former ought no more to be confounded with the latter, than the truths of geometry with the faculties of the reasoning mind which comprehends them. The virtuousness of justice was a stable doctrine in ethical science, anterior to the existence of the species; and would remain so, though the species were destroyed—just as much as the properties of a triangle are the enduring stabilities of mathematical science; and that, though no matter had been created to exemplify the positions or the figures of geometry. The objective nature of virtue is one thing. The subjective nature of the human mind, by which virtue is felt and recognized, is another. It is not from

the former, any more than from the eternal truths of geometry, that we can demonstrate the existence or attributes of God—but from the latter, as belonging to the facts of a creation emanating from His will, and therefore bearing upon it the stamp of His character. The nature and constitution of virtue form a distinct subject of enquiry from the nature and constitution of the human mind. Virtue is not a creation of the Divine will, but has had everlasting residence in the nature of the Godhead. The mind of man is a creation; and therefore indicates, by its characteristics, the character of Him, to the fiat and the forthgoing of whose will it owes its existence. We must frequently, in the course of this discussion, advert to the principles of ethics; but it is not on the system of ethical doctrine that our argument properly is founded. It is on the phenomena and the laws of actual human nature, which itself, one of the great facts of creation, may be regarded like all its facts, as bearing on it the impress of that mind which gave birth to creation.

2. But further. It is not only not with the system of ethical doctrine—it is not even with the full system of the philosophy of our nature that we have properly to do. On this last there is still a number of unsettled questions; but our peculiar argument does not need to wait for the conclusive determination of them. For example,

there is many a controversy among philosophers respecting the primary and secondary laws of the human constitution. Now, if it be an obviously beneficial law, it carries evidence for a God, in the mere existence and operation of it, independently of the rank which it holds, or of the relation in which it stands to the other principles of our internal mechanism. It is thus that there may, at one and the same time, be grounded on the law in question a clear theological inference; and yet there may be associated with it an obscure philosophical speculation. It is well that we separate these two; and, more especially, that the decisive attestation given by any part or phenomenon of our nature to the Divine goodness, shall not be involved in the mist and metaphysical perplexity of other reasonings, the object of which is altogether distinct and separate from our own. The facts of the human constitution, apart altogether from the philosophy of their causation, demonstrate the wisdom and benevolence of Him who framed it: and while it is our part to follow the light of this philosophy, as far as the light and the guidance of it are sure, we are not, in those cases, when the final cause is obvious as day, though the proximate efficient cause should be hidden in deepest mystery,—we are not, on this account, to confound darkness with light, or light with darkness.

3. By attending throughout to this observation, we shall be saved from a thousand irrelevancies as well as obscurities of argument; and it is an observation peculiarly applicable, in announcing that great fact or phenomenon of mind, which, for many reasons, should hold a foremost place in our demonstration—we mean the felt supremacy of conscience. Philosophers there are, who have attempted to resolve this fact into ulterior or ultimate ones in the mental constitution; and who have denied to the faculty a place among its original and uncompounded principles. Sir James Macintosh tells us of the generation of human conscience; and, not merely states, but endeavours to explain the phenomenon of its felt supremacy within us. Dr. Adam Smith also assigns a pedigree to our moral judgments; but, with all his peculiar notions respecting the origin of the awards of conscience, he never once disputes their authority; or, that, by the general consent of mankind, this authority is, in sentiment and opinion at least, conceded to them.* It is somewhat like an antiquarian

* "Upon whatever," observes Dr. Adam Smith, "we suppose our moral faculties to be founded, whether upon a certain modification of reason, upon an original instinct called a moral sense, or upon some other principle of our nature, it cannot be doubted that they were given us for the direction of our conduct in this life. They carry along with them the most evident badges of this authority, which denote that they were set up within us to be the supreme arbiters of all our actions, to superintend all our senses,

controversy respecting the first formation and subsequent historical changes of some certain court of government, the rightful authority of whose decisions and acts is, at the same time, fully recognized. And so, philosophers have disputed regarding the court of conscience—of what materials it is constructed, and by what line of genealogy from the anterior principles of our nature it has sprung. Yet most of these have admitted the proper right of sovereignty which belongs to it; its legitimate place as the master and the arbiter over all the appetites and desires and practical forces of human nature. Or, if any have dared the singularity of denying this, they do so in opposition to the general sense and general language of mankind, whose very modes of speech compel them to affirm that the biddings of conscience are of paramount authority—its peculiar office being to tell what all men should, or all men ought to do.

4. The proposition, however, which we are now urging, is not that the obligations of virtue are binding, but that man has a conscience which tells him that they are so—not that justice and truth and humanity are the dogmata of the

passions and appetites, and to judge how far each of them was either to be indulged or restrained. It is the peculiar office of these faculties to judge, to bestow censure or applause upon all the other principles of our nature."

Theory of Moral Sentiments, Part iii. chap. v.

abstract moral system, but that they are the dictates of man's moral nature—not that in themselves they are the constituent parts of moral rectitude, but that there is a voice within every heart which thus pronounces on them. It is not with the constitution of morality, viewed objectively, as a system or theory of doctrine, that we have properly to do; but with the constitution of man's spirit, viewed as the subject of certain phenomena and laws—and, more particularly, with a great psychological fact in human nature, namely, the homage rendered by it to the supremacy of conscience. In a word, it is not of a category, but of a creation that we are speaking. The one can tell us nothing of the divine character, while the other might afford most distinct and decisive indications of it. We could found no demonstration whatever of the divine purposes, on a mere ethical, any more than we could, on a logical or mathematical category. But it is very different with an actual creation, whether in mind or in matter—a mechanism of obvious contrivance, and whose workings and tendencies, therefore, must be referred to the design, and so to the disposition or character of that Being, whose spirit hath devised and whose fingers have framed it.

5. And neither do we urge the proposition that conscience has in every instance, the actual direction of human affairs, for this were in the

face of all experience. It is not that every man obeys her dictates, but that every man feels he ought to obey them. These dictates are often in life and practice disregarded: so that conscience is not the sovereign *de facto*. Still there is a voice within the hearts of all which asserts that conscience is the sovereign *de jure;* that to her belongs the command rightfully, even though she do not possess it actually. In a season of national anarchy, the actual power and the legitimate authority are often disjoined from each other. The lawful monarch may be dethroned, and so lose the might; while he continues to possess—nay, while he may be acknowledged throughout his kingdom to possess the right of sovereignty. The distinction still is made, even under this reign of violence, between the usurper and the lawful sovereign; and there is a similar distinction among the powers and principles of the human constitution, when an insurrection takes place of the inferior against the superior; and conscience, after being dethroned from her place of mastery and control, is still felt to be the superior, or rather supreme faculty of our nature notwithstanding. She may have fallen from her dominion, yet still wear the badges of a fallen sovereign, having the acknowledged right of authority, though the power of enforcement has been wrested away from her. She may be outraged in all her prerogatives by the lawless

appetites of our nature,—but not without the accompanying sense within of an outrage and a wrong having been inflicted, and a reclaiming voice from thence which causes itself to be heard and which remonstrates against it. The insurgent and inferior principles of our constitution may, in the uproar of their wild mutiny, lift a louder and more effective voice than the small still voice of conscience. They have the might but not the right. Conscience, on the other hand, is felt to have the right though not the might—the legislative office being that which properly belongs to her, though the executive power should be wanting to enforce her enactments. It is not the reigning but the rightful authority of conscience that we, under the name of her supremacy, contend for; or, rather the fact that, by the consent of all our higher principles and feelings, this rightful authority is reputed to be hers; and, by the general concurrence of mankind awarded to her.

6. And here it is of capital importance to distinguish between an original and proper tendency, and a subsequent aberration. This has been well illustrated by the regulator of a watch, whose office and primary design, and that obviously announced by the relation in which it stands to the other parts of the machinery, is to control the velocity of its movements. And we should still perceive this to have been its

destination, even though, by accident or decay, it had lost the power of command which at the first belonged to it. We should not misunderstand the purpose of its maker, although, in virtue of some deterioration or derangement which the machinery had undergone, that purpose were now frustrated. And we could discern the purpose in the very make and constitution of the mechanism. We might even see it to be an irregular watch; and yet this needs not prevent us from seeing, that, at its original fabrication, it was made for the purpose of moving regularly. The mere existence and position of the regulator might suffice to indicate this,—although it had become powerless, either from the wearing of the parts, or from some extrinsic disturbance to which the instrument had been exposed. The regulator, in this instance, may be said to have the right, though not the power of command, over the movements of the time-piece; yet the loss of the power has not obliterated the vestiges of the right; so that, by the inspection of the machinery alone, we both learn the injury which has been done to it, and the condition in which it originally came from the hand of its maker—a condition of actual as well as rightful supremacy, on the part of the regulator, over all its movements. And a similar discovery may be made, by examination of the various parts and principles which make up the

moral system of man: for we see various parts and principles there. We see Ambition, having power for its object, and without the attainment of which it is not satisfied; and Avarice, having wealth for its object, without the attainment of which it is not satisfied; and Benevolence, having for its object the good of others, without the attainment of which it is not satisfied; and the love of Reputation, having for its object their applause, without which it is not satisfied; and lastly, to proceed no further in the enumeration, Conscience, which surveys and superintends the whole man, whose distinct and appropriate object it is to have the entire control both of his inward desires and outward doings, and without the attainment of this it is thwarted from its proper aim, and remains unsatisfied. Each appetite, or affection of our nature, has its own distinct object; but this last is the object of Conscience, which may be termed the moral affection. The place which it occupies, or rather which it is felt that it should occupy, and which naturally belongs to it, is that of a governor, claiming the superiority, and taking to itself the direction over all the other powers and passions of humanity. If this superiority be denied to it, there is a felt violence done to the whole economy of man. The sentiment is, that the thing is not as it should be: and even after conscience is forced, in virtue of some subsequent derangement,

from this station of rightful ascendency, we can still distinguish between what is the primitive design or tendency, and what is the posterior aberration. We can perceive, in the case of a deranged or distempered watch, that the mechanism is out of order; but even then, on the bare examination of its workmanship, and more especially from the place and bearing of its regulator, can we pronounce that it was made for moving regularly. And in like manner, on the bare inspection of our mental economy alone, and more particularly from the place which conscience has there, can we, even in the case of the man who refuses to obey its dictates, affirm that he was made for walking conscientiously.

7. The distinction which we now labour to establish between conscience, and the other principles of our nature, does not respect the actual force or prevalence which may, or may not, severally belong to them. It respects the universal judgment which, by the very constitution of our nature, is passed on the question of rightness—on the question, which of all these should have the prevalence, whenever there happens to be a contest between them. All which we affirm is, that if conscience prevail over the other principles, then every man is led, by the very make and mechanism of his internal economy, to feel that this is as it ought to be; or, if these others prevail over conscience, that this

is not as it ought to be. One, it is generally felt, may be too ambitious, or too much set on wealth and fame, or too resentful of injury, or even too facile in his benevolence, when carried to the length of being injudicious and hurtful; but no one is ever felt, if he have sound and enlightened views of morality, to be too conscientious. When we affirm this of conscience, we but concur in the homage rendered to it by all men, as being the rightful, if not the actual superior, among all the feelings and faculties of our nature. It is a truth, perhaps, too simple for being reasoned; but this is because, like many of the most important and undoubted certainties of human belief, it is a truth of instant recognition. When stating the supremacy of conscience, in the sense that we have explained it, we but state what all men feel; and our only argument, in proof of the assertion, is—our only argument can be, an appeal to the experience of all men.

8. Bishop Butler has often been spoken of as the first discoverer of this great principle in our nature; though, perhaps, no man can properly be said to discover what all men are conscious of. But certain it is, that he is the first who hath made it the subject of a full and reflex cognizance. It forms the argument of his three first sermons, in a volume which may safely be pronounced, the most precious repository of

sound ethical principles extant in any language. The authority of conscience, says Dugald Stewart, "although beautifully described by many of the ancient moralists, was not sufficiently attended to by modern writers, as a fundamental principle in the science of ethics, till the time of Dr. Butler." It belongs to the very essence of the principle, that we clearly distinguish, between what we find to be the actual force of conscience, and what we feel to be its rightful authority. These two may exist in a state of separation from each other just as in a Civil Government, the reigning power may, in seasons of anarchy, be dissevered from that supreme court or magistrate to whom it rightfully belongs. The mechanism of a political fabric is not adequately or fully described by the mere enumeration of its parts. There must also enter into the description, the relation which the parts bear to each other; and more especially, the paramount relation of rightful ascendency and direction, which that part, in which the functions of Government are vested, bears to the whole. Neither is the mechanism of man's personal constitution fully or adequately described, by merely telling us in succession the several parts of which it is composed—as the passions, and the appetites, and the affections, and the moral sense, and the intellectual capacities, which make up this complex and variously gifted creature. The par-

ticulars of his mental system must not only be stated, each in their individuality; but the bearing or connection which each has with the rest—else it is not described as a system at all. In making out this description, we should not only not overlook the individual faculty of conscience, but we must not overlook its relative place among the other feelings and faculties of our nature. That place is the place of command. What conscience lays claim to is the mastery or regulation over the whole man. Each desire of our nature rests or terminates in its own appropriate object, as the love of fame in applause, or hunger in food, or revenge in the infliction of pain upon its object, or affection for another in the happiness and company of the beloved individual. But the object of the moral sense is to arbitrate and direct among all these propensities. It claims the station and the prerogative of a mistress over them. Its peculiar office is that of superintendence, and there is a certain feeling of violence or disorder, when the mandates which it issues in this capacity, are not carried into effect. Every affection in our nature is appeased by the object that is suited to it. The object of conscience is the subordination of the whole to its dictates. Without this it remains unappeased, and as if bereft of its rights. It is not a single faculty, taking its own separate and unconnected place among the other feelings and faculties

which belong to us. Its proper place is that of a guide or a governor. It is the ruling power in our nature; and its proper, its legitimate business, is to prescribe that man shall be as he ought, and do as he ought. But instead of expatiating any further at present in language of our own, let us here admit a few brief sentences from Butler himself, that great and invaluable expounder both of the human constitution, and of moral science. "That principle by which we survey, and either approve or disapprove our own heart, temper, and actions, is not only to be considered as what in its turn is to have some influence, which may be said of every passion, of the basest appetites: but likewise as being superior; as from its very nature manifestly claiming superiority over all others: insomuch that you cannot form a notion of this faculty conscience, without taking in judgment direction and superintendency. This is a constituent part of the idea, that is of the faculty itself: and to preside and govern, from the very œconomy and constitution of man, belongs to it. Had it strength, as it has right; had it power, as it has manifest authority; it would absolutely govern the world." "This faculty was placed within us to be our proper governor; to direct and regulate all under principles, passions, and motives of action. This is its right and office. Thus sacred is its authority. And how often soever men violate and rebelliously

refuse to submit to it, for supposed interest which they cannot otherwise obtain, or for the sake of passion which they cannot otherwise gratify; this makes no alteration as to the *natural right* and *office* of conscience.

9. Now it is in these phenomena of Conscience that Nature offers to us, far her strongest argument, for the moral character of God. Had He been an unrighteous Being himself, would He have given to this the obviously superior faculty in man, so distinct and authoritative a voice on the side of righteousness? Would He have so constructed the creatures of our species, as to have planted in every breast a reclaiming witness against himself? Would He have thus inscribed on the tablet of every heart the sentence of his own condemnation; and is not this just as unlikely, as that He should have inscribed it in written characters on the forehead of each individual? Would He so have fashioned the workmanship of His own hands; or, if a God of cruelty, injustice, and falsehood, would He have placed in the station of master and judge that faculty which, felt to be the highest in our nature, would prompt a generous and high-minded revolt of all our sentiments against the Being who formed us? From a God possessed of such characteristics, we should surely have expected a differently-moulded humanity; or, in other words, from the actual constitution of

man, from the testimonies on the side of all righteousness, given by the vicegerent within the heart, do we infer the righteousness of the Sovereign who placed it there. He would never have established a conscience in man, and invested it with the authority of a monitor, and given to it those legislative and judicial functions which it obviously possesses; and then so framed it, that all its decisions should be on the side of that virtue which he himself disowned, and condemnatory of that vice which he himself exemplified. This is an evidence for the righteousness of God, which keeps its ground, amid all the disorders and aberrations to which humanity is liable; and can no more, indeed, be deafened or overborne by these, than is the rightful authority of public opinion, by the occasional outbreakings of iniquity and violence which take place in society. This public opinion may, in those seasons of misrule when might prevails over right, be deforced from the practical ascendency which it ought to have; but the very sentiment that it so ought, is our reason for believing the world to have been originally formed, in order that virtue might have the rule over it. In like manner, when, in the bosom of every individual man, we can discern a conscience, placed there with the obvious design of being a guide and a commander, it were difficult not to believe, that, whatever the partial outrages may be which the

cause of virtue has to sustain, it has the public mind of the universe in its favor; and that therefore He, who is the Maker and the Ruler of such a universe, is a God of righteousness. Amid all the subsequent obscurations and errors, the original design, both of a deranged watch and of a deranged human nature, is alike manifest; first, of the maker of the watch, that its motions should harmonize with time; second, of the maker of man, that his movements should harmonize with truth and righteousness. We can, in most cases, discern between an aberration, and an original law; between a direct or primitive tendency and the effect of a disturbing force, by which that tendency is thwarted and overborne. And so of the constitution of man. It may be now a loosened and disproportioned thing, yet we can trace the original structure—even as from the fragments of a ruin, we can obtain the perfect model of a building from its capital to its base. It is thus that, however prostrate conscience may have fallen, we can still discern its place of native and original pre-eminence, as being at once the legislator and the judge in the moral system, though the executive forces of the system have made insurrection against it, and thrown the whole into anarchy. There is a depth of mystery in every thing connected with the existence or the origin of evil in creation; yet, even in the fiercest

uproar of our stormy passions, Conscience, though in her softest whispers, gives to the supremacy of rectitude the voice of an undying testimony; and her light still shining in a dark place, her unquelled accents still heard in the loudest outcry of Nature's rebellious appetites, form the strongest argument within reach of the human faculties, that, in spite of all partial or temporary derangements, Supreme Power and Supreme Goodness are at one. It is true that rebellious man hath, with daring footstep, trampled on the lessons of Conscience; but why, in spite of man's perversity, is conscience, on the other hand, able to lift a voice so piercing and so powerful, by which to remonstrate against the wrong, and to reclaim the honours that are due to her? How comes it that, in the mutiny and uproar of the inferior faculties, that faculty in man, which wears the stamp and impress of the highest, should remain on the side of truth and holiness? Would humanity have thus been moulded by a false and evil spirit; or would he have committed such impolicy against himself, as to insert in each member of our species a principle which would make him feel the greatest complacency in his own rectitude, when he feels the most high-minded revolt of indignation and dislike against the Being who gave him birth? It is not so much that Conscience takes a part among the other faculties of our nature; but

that Conscience takes among them the part of a governor, and that man, if he do not obey her suggestions, still, in despite of himself, acknowledges her rights. It is a mighty argument for the virtue of the governor above, that all the laws and injunctions of the governor below are on the side of virtue. It seems as if He had left this representative, or remaining witness, for Himself, in a world that had cast off its allegiance; and that, from the voice of the judge within the breast, we may learn the will and the character of Him who hath invested with such authority his dictates. It is this which speaks as much more demonstratively for the presidency of a righteous God in human affairs, than for that of impure or unrighteous demons, as did the rod of Aaron, when it swallowed the rods of the enchanters and magicians in Egypt. In the wildest anarchy of man's insurgent appetites and sins, there is still a reclaiming voice—a voice which, even when in practice disregarded, it is impossible not to own; and to which, at the very moment that we refuse our obedience, we find that we cannot refuse the homage of what ourselves do feel and acknowledge to be the best, the highest principles of our nature.

10. However difficult from the very simplicity of the subject it may be, to state or to reason the argument for a God, which is founded on the supremacy of conscience—still, historically

and experimentally, it will be found, that it is of more force than all other arguments put together, for originating and upholding the natural theism which there is in the world. The theology of conscience is not only of wider diffusion, but of far more practical influence than the theology of academic demonstration. The ratiocination by which this theology is established, is not the less firm or the less impressive, that, instead of a lengthened process, there is but one step between the premises and the conclusion—or, that the felt presence of a judge within the breast, powerfully and immediately suggests the notion of a Supreme Judge and Sovereign, who placed it there. Upon this question, the mind does not stop short at mere abstraction; but, passing at once from the abstract to the concrete, from the law of the heart, it makes the rapid inference of a lawgiver. It is the very rapidity of this inference which makes it appear like intuition; and which has given birth to the mystic theology of innate ideas. Yet the theology of conscience disclaims such mysticism, built, as it is, on a foundation of sure and sound reasoning; for the strength of an argumentation in nowise depends upon the length of it. The sense of a governing principle within, begets in all men the sentiment of a living governor without and above them, and it does so with all the speed of an instantaneous feeling; yet it is not an impression, it is an in-

ference notwithstanding—and as much so as any inference from that which is seen, to that which is unseen. There is, in the first instance, cognizance taken of a fact—if not by the outward eye, yet as good, by the eye of consciousness which has been termed the faculty of internal observation. And the consequent belief of a God, instead of being an instinctive sense of the Divinity, is the fruit of an inference grounded on that fact. There is instant transition made, from the sense of a Monitor within to the faith of a living Sovereign above; and this argument, described by all, but with such speed as almost to warrant the expression of its being felt by all, may be regarded, notwithstanding the force and fertility of other considerations, as the great prop of natural religion among men.

11. And we mistake, if we think it was ever otherwise, even in the ages of darkest and most licentious paganism. This theology of conscience has often been greatly obscured, but never, in any country or at any period in the history of the world, has it been wholly obliterated. We behold the vestiges of it in the simple theology of the desert; and, perhaps, more distinctly there, than in the complex superstitions of an artificial and civilized heathenism. In confirmation of this, we might quote the invocations to the Great Spirit from the wilds of North America. But, indeed, in every quarter

of the globe, where missionaries have held converse with savages, even with the rudest of nature's children—when speaking on the topics of sin and judgment, they did not speak to them in vocables unknown. And as this sense of a universal law and a Supreme Lawgiver never waned into total extinction among the tribes of ferocious and untamed wanderers—so neither was it altogether stifled by the refined and intricate polytheism of more enlightened nations. The whole of classic authorship teems with allusions to a Supreme Governor and Judge: And when the guilty Emperors of Rome were tempest-driven by remorse and fear, it was not that they trembled before a spectre of their own imagination. When terror mixed, which it often did, with the rage and cruelty of Nero, it was the theology of conscience which haunted him. It was not the suggestion of a capricious fancy which gave him the disturbance—but a voice issuing from the deep recesses of a moral nature, as stable and uniform throughout the species as is the material structure of humanity; and in the lineaments of which we may read that there is a moral regimen among men, and therefore a moral Governor who hath instituted, and who presides over it. Therefore, it was that these imperial despots, the worst and haughtiest of recorded monarchs, stood aghast at the spectacle of their own worthlessness. It is true, there is a

wretchedness which naturally and essentially belongs to a state of great moral unhingement; and this may account for their discomforts, but it will not account for their fears. They may, because of this, have felt the torments of a present misery. But whence their fears of a coming vengeance? They would not have trembled at nature's law, apart from the thought of nature's lawgiver. The imagination of an unsanctioned law would no more have given disquietude, than the imagination of a vacant throne. But the law, to their guilty apprehensions, bespoke a judge. The throne of heaven, to their troubled eye, was filled by a living monarch. Righteousness, it was felt, would not have been so enthroned in the moral system of man, had it not been previously enthroned in the system of the universe; nor would it have held such place and pre-eminence in the judgment of all spirits, had not the father of spirits been its friend and ultimate avenger. This is not a local or geographical notion. It is a universal feeling—to be found wherever men are found, because interwoven with the constitution of humanity. It is not, therefore, the peculiarity of one creed, or of one country. It circulates at large throughout the family of man. We can trace it in the theology of savage life; nor is it wholly overborne by the artificial theology of a more complex and idolatrous paganism. Neither crime nor civiliza-

tion can extinguish it; and, whether in the "conscientia scelerum" of the fierce and frenzied Cataline, or in the tranquil contemplative musings of Socrates and Cicero, we find the impression of at once a righteous and a reigning Sovereign.

12. And it confirms still more our idea of a government—that conscience not only gives forth her mandates with the tone and authority of a Superior; but, as if on purpose to enforce their observance, thus follows them up with an obvious discipline of rewards and punishments. It is enough but to mention, on the one hand, that felt complacency which is distilled, like some precious elixir, upon the heart by the recollection of virtuous deeds and virtuous sacrifices; and, on the other hand, those inflictions of remorse, which are attendant upon wickedness, and wherewith, as if by the whip of a secret tormentor, the heart of every conscious sinner is agonized. We discern in these the natural sanctions of morality, and the moral character of Him who hath ordained them. We cannot otherwise explain the peace and triumphant satisfaction which spring from the consciousness of well doing—nor can we otherwise explain the degradation as well as bitter distress, which a sense of demerit brings along with it. Our only adequate interpretation of these phenomena is, that they are the present remunerations or the

present chastisements of a God who loveth righteousness, and who hateth iniquity. Nor do we view them as the conclusive results of virtue and vice, but rather as the tokens and the precursors either of a brighter reward or of a heavier vengeance, that are coming. It is thus that the delight of self-approbation, instead of standing alone, brings hope in its train; and remorse, instead of standing alone, brings terror in its train. The expectations of the future are blended with these joys and sufferings of the present; and all serve still more to stamp an impression, of which traces are to be found in every quarter of the earth—that we live under a retributive economy, and that the God who reigns over it takes a moral and judicial cognizance of the creatures whom He hath formed.

13. What then are the specific injunctions of conscience? for on this question essentially depends every argument that we can derive from this power or property of our nature, for the moral character of God. If, on the one hand, the lessons given forth by a faculty, which so manifestly claims to be the pre-eminent and ruling faculty of our nature, be those of deceit and licentiousness and cruelty—then, from the character of such a law, should we infer the character of the lawgiver; and so feel the conclusion to be inevitable, that we are under the government of a malignant and unrighteous God, at

once the patron of vice and the persecutor of virtue in the world. If on the other hand, temperance, and chastity, and kindness, and integrity, and truth, be the mandates which generally, if not invariably proceed from her—then, on the same principles of judgment, should we reckon that He who is the author of conscience, and who gave it the place of supremacy and honour, which it so obviously possesses in the moral system of man, was himself the friend and the exemplar of all those virtues which enter into the composition of perfect moral rectitude. In the laws and the lessons of human conscience, would we study the character of the Godhead, just as we should study the views and dispositions of a monarch, in the instructions given by him to the viceroy of one of his provinces. If, on the one hand, virtue be prescribed by the authority of conscience, and followed up by her approval, in which very approval there is felt an inward satisfaction and serenity of spirit, that of itself forms a most delicious reward; and if, on the other hand, the perpetrations of wickedness are followed up by the voice of her rebuke, in which, identical with remorse, there is a sting of agony and discomfort, amounting to the severest penalty—then, are we as naturally disposed to infer of Him who ordained such a mental constitution that He is the righteous Governor of men, as, if seated on a visible throne in the midst of

us, He had made the audible proclamation of His law, and by His own immediate hand, had distributed of His gifts to the obedient, and inflicted chastisements on the rebellious. The law of conscience may be regarded as comprising all those virtues which the hand of the Deity hath inscribed on the tablet of the human heart, or on the tablet of natural jurisprudence; and an argument for these being the very virtues which characterize and adorn Himself, is that they must have been transcribed from the prior tablet of His own nature.

14. We are sensible that there is much to obscure this inference in the actual circumstances of the world. More especially—it has been alleged, on the side of scepticism, that there is an exceeding diversity of moral judgments among men; that, out of the multifarious decisions of the human conscience, no consistent code of virtue can be framed; and that, therefore, no consistent character can be ascribed to Him, who planted this faculty in the bosom of our species, and bade it speak so uncertainly and so variously.* But to this it may be answered, in the first place, that the apparent diversity is

* On the uniformity of our moral judgments, we would refer to the 74th and 75th of Dr. Brown's Lectures on the Philosophy of the Human Mind. "If we bear in mind" says Sir James Mackintosh, "that the question relates to the coincidence of all men in considering the same qualities as virtues, and not to the preference of one class of virtues by some, and of a different class

partly reducible into the blinding, or, at least, the distorting effect of passion and interest, which sometimes are powerful enough to obscure our perception, even of mathematical and historical truths, as well as of moral distinctions; and without therefore affecting the stability of either. It is thus, for example, that mercantile cupidity has blinded many a reckless adventurer to the enormous injustice of the slave-trade; that passion and interest together have transmuted revenge into a virtue; and that the robbery, which, if prosecuted only for the sake of individual gain, would have appeared to all under an aspect of most revolting selfishness, puts on the guise of patriotism, when a whole nation deliberates on the schemes, or is led by a career of daring and lofty heroism, to the spoliations of conquest. In all such cases, it is of capital importance to distinguish between the real character of any criminal action, when looked to calmly, comprehensively, and fully; and what that is in the action which the perpetrator singles out and fastens upon as his plea, when he is either defending it to others, or reconciling it to his own conscience. In as far as he knows the deed to

by others, the exceptions from the agreement of mankind, in their systems of practical morality, will be reduced to absolute insignificance; and we shall learn to view them as no more affecting the harmony of the moral faculties, than the resemblance of the limbs and features is affected by monstrous conformations, or by the unfortunate effects of accident and disease in a very few individuals."

be incapable of vindication, and yet rushes on the performance of it, there is but delinquency of conduct incurred, not a diversity of moral judgment; nor does Conscience, in this case, at all betray any caprice or uncertainty in her decisions. It is but the conduct, and not the conscience, which is in fault; and to determine whether the latter is in aught chargeable with fluctuation, we must look not to the man's performance, but to his plea. Two men may differ as to the moral character of an action; but if each is resting the support of his own view on a different principle from the other, there may still be a perfect uniformity of moral sentiment between them. They own the authority of the same laws; they only disagree in the application of them. In the first place, the most vehement denouncer of a guilty commerce is at one with the most strenuous of its advocates, on the duty which each man owes to his family; and again, neither of them would venture to maintain the lawfulness of the trade, because of the miseries inflicted by it on those wretched sufferers who were its victims. The defender of this ruthless and rapacious system disowns not, in sentiment at least, however much he may disown in practice, the obligations of justice and humanity—nay, in all the palliations which he attempts of the enormity in question, he speaks of these as undoubted virtues, and renders the homage of

his moral acknowledgments to them all. In the sophistry of his vindication, the principles of the ethical system are left untouched and entire. He meddles not with the virtuousness either of humanity or justice; but he tells of the humanity of slavery, and the justice of slavery. It is true, that he heeds not the representations which are given of the atrocities of his trade—that he does not attend because he wills not to attend; and in this there is practical unfairness. Still it but resolves itself into perversity of conduct, and not into perversity of sentiment. The very dread and dislike he has for the informations of the subject, are symptoms of a feeling that his conscience cannot be trusted with the question; or, in other words, prove him to be possessed of a conscience which is just like that of other men. The partialities of interest and feeling may give rise to an infinite diversity of moral judgments in our estimate of actions; while there may be the most perfect uniformity and stability of judgment in our estimate of principles: and, on all the great generalities of the ethical code, Conscience may speak the same language, and own one and the same moral directory all the world over.

15. When consciences then pronounce differently of the same action, it is for the most part, or rather, it is almost always, because understandings view it differently. It is either because

the controversialists are regarding it with unequal degrees of knowledge; or, each, through the medium of his own partialities. The consciences of all would come forth with the same moral decision, were all equally enlightened in the circumstances, or in the essential relations and consequences of the deed in question; and, what is just as essential to this uniformity of judgment, were all viewing it fairly as well as fully. It matters not, whether it be ignorantly or wilfully, that each is looking to this deed, but in the one aspect, or in the one relation that is favourable to his own peculiar sentiment. In either case, the diversity of judgment on the moral qualities of the same action, is just as little to be wondered at as a similar diversity on the material qualities of the same object—should any of the spectators labour under an involuntary defect of vision, or voluntarily persist either in shutting or in averting his eyes. It is thus that a quarrel has well been termed a misunderstanding, in which each of the combatants may consider, and often honestly consider, himself to be in the right; and that, on reading the hostile memorials of two parties in a litigation, we can perceive no difference in their moral principles, but only in their historical statements; and that, in the public manifestoes of nations when entering upon war, we can discover no trace of a contrariety of conflict in their ethical systems, but only in their

differently put or differently coloured representations of fact; all proving, that, with the utmost diversity of judgment among men respecting the moral qualities of the same thing, there may be a perfect identity of structure in their moral organs notwithstanding; and that Conscience, true to her office, needs but to be rightly informed, that she may speak the same language, and give forth the same lessons in all the countries of the earth.

16. It is this which explains the moral peculiarities of different nations. It is not that justice, humanity, and gratitude are not the canonized virtues of every region; or that falsehood, cruelty, and fraud would not, in their abstract and unassociated nakedness, be viewed as the objects of moral antipathy and rebuke. It is, that, in one and the same material action, when looked to in all the lights of which, whether in reality or by the power of imagination, it is susceptible, various, nay, opposite moral characteristics may be blended; and that while one people look to the good only without the evil, another may look to the evil only without the good. And thus the identical acts which in one nation are the subjects of a most reverent and religious observance, may, in another be regarded with a shuddering sense of abomination and horror. And this, not because of any difference in what may be termed the moral categories of the two people, nor be-

cause, if moral principles in their unmixed generality were offered to the contemplation of either, either would call evil good or good evil. When theft was publicly honoured and rewarded in Sparta, it was not because theft in itself was reckoned a good thing; but because patriotism, and dexterity, and those services by which the interests of patriotism might be supported, were reckoned to be good things. When the natives of Hindostan assemble with delight around the agonies of a human sacrifice, it is not because they hold it good to rejoice in a spectacle of pain; but because they hold it good to rejoice in a spectacle of heroic devotion to the memory of the dead. When parents are exposed or children are destroyed, it is not because it is deemed to be right that there should be the infliction of misery for its own sake; but because it is deemed to be right that the wretchedness of old age should be curtailed, or that the world should be saved from the miseries of an over-crowded species. In a word, in the very worst of these anomalies, some form of good may be detected, which has led to their establishment; and still, some universal and undoubted principle of morality, however perverted or misapplied, can be alleged in vindication of them. A people may be deluded by their ignorance; or misguided by their superstition; or, not only hurried into wrong deeds, but even fostered into wrong senti-

ments, under the influences of that cupidity or revenge, which are so perpetually operating in the warfare of savage or demisavage nations. Yet, in spite of all the topical moralities to which these have given birth, there is an unquestioned and universal morality notwithstanding. And in every case, where the moral sense is unfettered by these associations; and the judgment is uncramped, either by the partialities of interest or by the inveteracy of national customs which habit and antiquity have rendered sacred—Conscience is found to speak the same language, nor, to the remotest ends of the world, is there a country or an island, where the same uniform and consistent voice is not heard from her. Let the mists of ignorance and passion and artificial education be only cleared away; and the moral attributes of goodness and righteousness and truth be seen undistorted, and in their own proper guise; and there is not a heart or a conscience throughout earth's teeming population, which could refuse to do them homage. And it is precisely because the Father of the human family has given such hearts and conscience, to all his children, that we infer these to be the very sanctities of the Godhead, the very attributes of his own primeval nature.

17. There is a countless diversity of tastes in the world, because of the infinitely various circumstances and associations of men. Yet is

there a stable and correct standard of taste notwithstanding, to which all minds, that have the benefit of culture and enlargement, are gradually assimilating and approximating. It holds far more emphatically true, that, in spite of the diversity of moral judgments, which are vastly less wide and numerous than the former, there is a fixed standard of morals, rallying around itself all consciences, to the greater principles of which, a full and unanimous homage is rendered from every quarter of the globe; and even to the lesser principles and modifications of which, there is a growing and gathering consent, with every onward step in the progress of light and civilization. In proportion as the understandings of men become more enlightened, do their consciences become more accordant with each other. Even now there is not a single people on the face of the earth, among whom barbarity and licentiousness and fraud are deified as virtues,—where it does not require the utmost strength, whether of superstition or of patriotism in its most selfish and contracted form, to uphold the delusion. Apart from these local and, we venture to hope, these temporary exceptions, the same moralities are recognized and honoured; and, however prevalent in practice, in sentiment at least, the same vices are disowned and execrated all the world over. In proportion as superstition is dissipated, and prejudice is gradually

weakened by the larger intercourse of nations, these moral peculiarities do evidently wear away; till at length, if we may judge from the obvious tendency of things, conscience will, in the full manhood of our species, assert the universality and the unchangeableness of her decisions. There is no speech nor language, where her voice is not heard; her line is gone out through all the earth; and her words to the ends of the world.

18. On the whole, then, conscience, whether it be an original or a derived faculty, yet as founded on human nature, if not forming a constituent part of it, may be regarded as a faithful witness for God the author of that nature, and as rendering to his character a consistent testimony. It is not necessary, for the establishment of our particular lesson, that we should turn that which is clear into that which is controversial by our entering into the scientific question respecting the physical origin of conscience, or tracing the imagined pedigree of its descent from simpler or anterior principles in the constitution of man. For, as has been well remarked by Sir James Mackintosh—"If conscience be inherent, that circumstance is, according to the common mode of thinking, a sufficient proof of its title to veneration. But if provision be made, in the constitution and circumstances of all men for uniformity, producing it by processes similar to

those which produce other acquired sentiments, may not our reverence be augmented by admiration of that supreme wisdom, which, in such mental contrivances, yet more highly than in the lower world of matter, accomplish mighty purposes by instruments so simple?" It is not therefore the physical origin, but the fact, of the uniformity of conscience, wherewith is concerned the theological inference that we attempt to draw from it. This ascendant faculty of our nature, which has been so often termed the divinity within us, notwithstanding the occasional sophistry of the passions, is on the whole, representative of the Divinity above us; and the righteousness and goodness and truth the lessons of which it gives forth every where, may well be regarded, both as the laws which enter into the juridical constitution, and as the attributes which enter into the moral character of God.

19. We admit a considerable diversity of moral observation in the various countries of the earth, but without admitting any correspondent diversity of moral sentiment between them. When human sacrifices are enforced and applauded in one nation—this is not because of their cruelty, but notwithstanding of their cruelty. Even there, the universal principle of humanity would be acknowledged, that it were wrong to inflict a wanton and uncalled for agony on any of our fellows—but there is a local superstition which

counteracts the universal principle, and overbears it. When in the republic of Sparta, theft, instead of being execrated as a crime, was dignified into an art and an accomplishment, and on that footing admitted into the system of their youthful education—it was not because of its infringement on the rights of property, but notwithstanding of that infringement, and only because a local patriotism made head against the universal principle, and prevailed over it. Apart from such disturbing forces as these, it will be found that the sentiments of men gravitate towards one and the same standard all over the globe; and that, when once the obscurations of superstition and selfishness are dissipated, there will be found the same moral light in every mind, a recognition of the same moral law, as the immutable and eternal code of righteousness for all countries and all ages. The following is the noble testimony of a heathen, who tells us with equal eloquence and truth, that, even amid all the perversities of a vitiated and endlessly diversified creed, conscience sat mistress over the whole earth, and asserted the supremacy of her own unalterable obligations. "Est quidem vera lex, recta ratio, naturæ congruens, diffusa in omnes, constans, sempiterna, quæ vocet ad officium jubendo, vetando a fraude deterreat; quæ tamen neque probos frustra jubet aut vetat, nec improbos jubendo aut vetando movet. Huic

legi nec obrogari fas est, neque derogari ex hac aliquid licet, neque tota abrogari potest. Nec vero, aut per senatum aut per populum solvi hac lege possumus. Neque est quærendus explanator aut interpres ejus alius. Nec erit alia lex Romæ, alia Athenis, alia nunc, alia posthac; sed et omnes gentes, et omni tempore, una lex et sempiterna et immortalis continebit; unusque erit communis quasi magister, et imperator omnium Deus ille, legis hujus inventor, disceptator, lator; cui qui non parebit, ipse se fugiet, ac naturam hominis aspernabitur, atque hoc ipso luet maximas pœnas, etiam si cætera supplicia quæ putantur effugerit."

20. Such then is our first argument for the moral character of God—even the moral character of the law of conscience; that conscience which He hath inserted among the faculties of our nature; and armed with the felt authority of a master; and furnished with sanctions for the enforcement of its dictates; and so framed, that, apart from local perversities of the understanding or the habits, all its decisions are on the side of righteousness. The inference is neither a distant nor an obscure one, from the character of such a law to the character of its law-giver. Neither is it an inference, destroyed by the insurrection which has taken place on the part of our lower faculties, or by the actual prevalence of vice in the world. For this has only enabled conscience

to come forth with another and additional demonstration of its sovereignty—just as the punishment of crime in society bears evidence to the justice of the government which is established there. In general, the inward complacency felt by the virtuous, does not so impressively bespeak the real purpose and character of this the ruling faculty in man, as do the remorse, and the terror, and the bitter dissatisfaction, wherewith the hearts of the wicked are exercised. It is true, that, by every act of iniquity, outrage is done to the law of conscience; but there is a felt reaction within which tells that the outrage is resented; and then it is, that conscience makes most emphatic assertion of its high prerogative, when, instead of coming forth as the benign and generous dispenser of its rewards to the obedient, it comes forth like an offended monarch in the character of an avenger. Were we endowed with prophetic vision, so as to behold, among the yet undisclosed secrets of futurity, the spectacle of a judge, and a judgment-seat, and an assembled world, and the retributions of pleasure and pain to the good and to the evil; this were fetching from afar an argument for the righteousness of God. But the instant pleasure and the instant pain wherewith conscience follows up the doings of man, brings this very argument within the limits of actual observation. Only, instead of being manifested by the light of a preterna-

tural revelation, it is suggested to us by one of the most familiar certainties of experience, for in these phenomena and feelings of our own moral nature, do we behold not only a present judgment, but a present execution of the sentence.

Chapter II.

SECOND GENERAL ARGUMENT.

On the inherent Pleasure of the Virtuous, and Misery of the Vicious Affections.

1. We are often told by moralists, that there is a native and essential happiness in moral worth; and a like native and essential wretchedness in moral depravity—insomuch that the one may be regarded as its own reward, and the other as its own punishment. We do not always recollect that this happiness on the one hand, and this misery on the other, are each of them made up, severally of distinct ingredients; and that thus, by mental analysis, we might strengthen our argument both for the being and the character of God. When we discover, that, into this alleged happiness of the good there enter more enjoyments than one, we thereby obtain two or

more testimonies of the divine regard for virtue; and the proof is enhanced in the same peculiar way, that the evidence of design is, in any other department of creation, when we perceive the concurrence of so many separate and independent elements, which meet together for the production of some complex and beneficial result.*

2. We have already spoken of one such ingredient. There is a felt satisfaction in the thought of having done what we know to be right; and, in counterpart to this complacency of self-approbation, there is a felt discomfort, amounting often to bitter and remorseful agony, in the thought of having done what conscience tells us to be wrong. This implies a sense of the rectitude of what is virtuous. But without thinking of its rectitude at all, without viewing it in reference either to the law of conscience or to the law of God, with no regard to jurisprudence in the matter—there is, in the virtuous affection itself, another and a distinct enjoyment. We ought to cherish and to exercise benevolence; and there is a pleasure in the consciousness of doing what we ought: but beside this moral sentiment, and beside the peculiar pleasure appended to benevolence as moral, there is a sensation in the merely physical affection of benevolence; and

* See Chap. I. 6.

that sensation, of itself, is in the highest degree pleasurable. The primary or instant gratification which there is in the direct and immediate feeling of benevolence is one thing: the secondary or reflex gratification which there is in the consciousness of benevolence as moral is another thing. The two are distinct of themselves; but the contingent union of them, in the case of every virtuous affection, gives a multiple force to the conclusion, that God is the lover, and, because so, the patron or the rewarder of virtue. He hath so constituted our nature, that, in the very flow and exercise of the good affections, there shall be the oil of gladness. There is instant delight in the first conception of benevolence. There is sustained delight in its continued exercise. There is consummated delight in the happy smiling and prosperous result of it. Kindness, and honesty, and truth, are, of themselves, and irrespective of their rightness, sweet unto the taste of the inner man. Malice, envy, falsehood, injustice, irrespective of their wrongness, have of themselves, the bitterness of gall and wormwood. The Deity hath annexed a high mental enjoyment, not to the consciousness only of good affections, but to the very sense and feeling of good affections. However closely these may follow on each other—nay, however implicated or blended together they may be at the same moment into one compound state of feeling;

they are not the less distinct on that account, of themselves. They form two pleasurable sensations, instead of one; and their apposition, in the case or every virtuous deed or virtuous desire, exhibits to us that very concurrence in the world of mind, which obtains with such frequency and fulness in the world of matter—affording, in every new part that is added, not a simply repeated only, but a vastly multiplied evidence for design, throughout all its combinations. There is a pleasure in the very sensation of virtue; and there is a pleasure attendant on the sense of its rectitude These two phenomena are independent of each other. Let there be a certain number of chances against the first in a random economy of things, and also a certain number of chances against the second. In the actual economy of things, where there is the conjunction of both phenomena—it is the product of these two numbers which represents the amount of evidence afforded by them, for a moral government in the world, and a moral Governor over them.

3. In the calm satisfactions of virtue, this distinction may not be so palpable, as in the pungent and more vividly felt disquietudes which are attendant on the wrong affections of our nature. The perpetual corrosion of that heart, for example, which frets in unhappy peevishness all the day long, is plainly distinct from the

bitterness of that remorse which is felt, in the recollection of its harsh and injurious outbreakings on the innocent sufferers within its reach. It is saying much for the moral character of God, that he has placed a conscience within us, which administers painful rebuke on every indulgence of a wrong affection. But it is saying still more for such being the character of our Maker—so to have framed our mental constitution, that, in the very working of these bad affections there should be the painfulness of a felt discomfort and discordancy. Such is the make or mechanism of our nature, that it is thwarted and put out of sorts, by rage and envy, and hatred; and this, irrespective of the adverse moral judgments which conscience passes upon them. Of themselves, they are unsavoury; and no sooner do they enter the heart, than they shed upon it an immediate distillation of bitterness. Just as the placid smile of benevolence bespeaks the felt comfort of benevolence; so, in the frown and tempest of an angry countenance, do we read the unhappiness of that man who is vexed and agitated by his own malignant affections—eating inwardly as they do on the vitals of his enjoyment. It is, therefore, that he is often styled, and truly, a self-tormentor; or, his own worst enemy. The delight of virtue in itself, is a separate thing from the delight of the conscience which approves it. And the pain

of moral evil in itself, is a separate thing from the pain inflicted by conscience in the act of condemning it. They offer to our notice two distinct ingredients, both of the present reward attendant upon virtue, and of the present penalty attendant upon vice; and so, enhance the evidence that is before our eyes, for the moral character of that administration, under which the world has been placed by its author. The appetite of hunger is rightly alleged, in evidence of the care, wherewith the Deity hath provided for the well-being of our natural constitution; and the pleasurable taste of food is rightly alleged as an additional proof of the same. And so, if the urgent voice of conscience within, calling us to virtue, be alleged in evidence of the care, wherewith the Deity hath provided for the well-being of our moral constitution; the pleasurable taste of virtue in itself, with the bitterness of its opposite, may well be alleged as additional evidence thereof. They alike afford the present and the sensible tokens of a righteous administration, and so of a righteous God.

4. Our present argument is grounded, neither on the rectitude of virtue, nor on its utility in the grosser and more palpable sense of that term —but on the immediate sweetness of it. It is the office of conscience to tell us of its rectitude. It is by experience that we learn its utility.

But the sweetness of it—the *dulce* of virtue, as distinguished from its *utile*, is a thing of instant sensation. It may be decomposed into two ingredients, with one of which conscience has to do—even the pleasure we have, when any deed or any affection of ours receives from her a favourable verdict. But it has another ingredient which forms the proper and the distinct argument that we are now urging—even the pleasure we have in the mere relish of the affection itself. If it be a proof of benevolence in God, that our external organs of taste should have been so framed, as to have a liking for wholesome food; it is no less the proof both of a benevolent and a righteous God, so to have framed our mental economy, as that right and wholesome morality should be palatable to the taste of the inner man. Virtue is not only seen to be right—it is felt to be delicious. There is happiness in the very wish to make others happy. There is a heart's ease, or a heart's enjoyment, even in the first purposes of kindness, as well as in its subsequent performances. There is a certain rejoicing sense of clearness in the consistency, the exactitude of justice and truth. There is a triumphant elevation of spirit in magnanimity and honour. In perfect harmony with this, there is a placid feeling of serenity and blissful contentment in gentleness and humility. There is a noble satisfaction in

those victories, which, at the bidding of principle, or by the power of self-command, may have been achieved over the propensities of animal nature. There is an elate independence of soul, in the consciousness of having nothing to hide, and nothing to be ashamed of. In a word, by the constitution of our nature, each virtue has its appropriate charm; and virtue, on the whole, is a fund of varied, as well as of perpetual enjoyment, to him who hath imbibed its spirit, and is under the guidance of its principles. He feels all to be health and harmony within; and without he seems as if to breathe in an atmosphere of beauteous transparency—proving how much the nature of man and the nature of virtue are in unison with each other. It is hunger which urges to the use of food; but it strikingly demonstrates the care and benevolence of God, so to have framed the organ of taste, as that there shall be a superadded enjoyment in the use of it. It is conscience which urges to the practice of virtue; but it serves to enhance the proof of a moral purpose, and therefore of a moral character in God, so to have framed our mental economy, that, in addition to the felt obligation of its rightness, virtue should of itself, be so regaling to the taste of the inner man.

5. In counterpart to these sweets and satisfactions of virtue, is the essential and inherent bitterness of all that is morally evil. We repeat,

that, with this particular argument, we do not mix up the agonies of remorse. It is the wretchedness of vice in itself, not the wretchedness which we suffer because of its recollected and felt wrongness that we now speak of. It is not the painfulness of the compunction felt because of our anger, upon which we at this moment insist; but the painfulness of the emotion itself; and the same remark applies to all the malignant desires of the human heart. True, it is inseparable from the very nature of a desire, that there must be some enjoyment or other, at the time of its gratification; but, in the case of these evil affections, it is not unmixed enjoyment. The most ordinary observer of his own feelings, however incapable of analysis, must be sensible, even at the moment of wreaking, in full indulgence of his resentment, on the man who has provoked or injured him, that all is not perfect and entire enjoyment within; but that, in this, and indeed in every other malignant feeling, there is a sore burden of disquietude—an unhappiness tumultuating in the heart, and visibly pictured on the countenance. The ferocious tyrant who has only to issue forth his mandate, and strike dead at pleasure the victim of his wrath, with any circumstance too of barbaric caprice and cruelty, which his fancy in the very waywardness of passion unrestrained and power unbounded might suggest to him—he may be said to have experienced

through life a thousand gratifications, in the solaced rage and revenge, which, though ever breaking forth on some new subject, he can appease again every day of his life by some new execution. But we mistake it if we think otherwise than that, in spite of these distinct and very numerous nay daily gratifications if he so choose, it is not a life of fierce internal agony notwithstanding. It seems indispensable to the nature of every desire, and to form part indeed of its very idea, that there should be a distinctly felt pleasure, or at least, a removal at the time of a distinctly felt pain, in the act of its fulfilment—yet, whatever recreation or relief may have thus been rendered, without doing away the misery often in the whole amount of it the intense misery, inflicted upon man by the evil propensities of his nature. Who can doubt for example the unhappiness of the habitual drunkard?—and that, although the ravenous appetite, by which he is driven along a stormy career, meets every day, almost every hour of the day, with the gratification that is suited to it. The same may be equally affirmed of the voluptuary, or of the depredator, or of the extortioner, or of the liar. Each may succeed in the attainment of his specific object; and we cannot possibly disjoin from the conception of success, the conception of some sort of pleasure—yet in perfect consistency, we affirm, with a sad and heavy

burthen of unpleasantness or unhappiness on the whole. He is little conversant with our nature who does not know of many a passion belonging to it, that it may be the instrument of many pleasurable, nay delicious or exquisite sensations, and yet be a wretched passion still; the domineering tyrant of a bondsman, who at once knows himself to be degraded, and feels himself to be unhappy. A sense of guilt is one main ingredient of this misery—yet physically, and notwithstanding the pleasure or the relief inseparable at the moment from every indulgence of the passions, there are other sensations of bitterness, which of themselves, and apart from remorse, would cause the suffering to preponderate.

6. There is an important discrimination made by Bishop Butler in his sermons; and, by the help of which, this phenomenon, of apparent contradiction or mystery in our nature, may be satisfactorily explained. He distinguishes between the final object of any of our desires, and the pleasure attendant on or rather inseparable from its gratification. The object is not the pleasure, though the pleasure be an unfailing and essential accompaniment on the attainment of the object. This is well illustrated by the appetite of hunger, of which it were more proper to say that it seeks for food, than that it seeks for the pleasure which there is in eating the food.

The food is the object; the pleasure is the accompaniment. We do not here speak of the distinct and secondary pleasure which there is in the taste of food, but of that other pleasure which strictly and properly attaches to the gratification of the appetite of hunger. This is the pleasure, or relief, which accompanies the act of eating; while the ultimate object, the object in which the appetite rests and terminates, is the food itself. The same is true of all our special affections. Each has a proper and peculiar object of its own, and the mere pleasure attendant on the prosecution or the indulgence of the affection is not, as has been clearly established by Butler and fully reasserted by Dr. Thomas Brown, is not that object. The two are as distinct from each other, as a thing loved is distinct from the pleasure of loving it. Every special inclination has its special and counterpart object. The object of the inclination is one thing; the pleasure of gratifying the inclination is another; and, in most instances, it were more proper to say, that it is for the sake of the object than for the sake of the pleasure that the inclination is gratified. The distinction that we now urge though felt to be a subtle, is truly a substantial one; and pregnant, both with important principle and important application. The discovery and clear statement of it by Butler may well be regarded as the highest service rendered by any philo-

sopher to moral science; and that, from the light which it casts, both on the processes of the human constitution and on the theory of virtue. As one example of the latter service, the principle in question, so plainly and convincingly unfolded by this great Christian philosopher in his sermon on the love of our neighbour, strikes, and with most conclusive effect, at the root of the selfish system of morals; a system which professes that man's sole object, in the practice of all the various moralities, is his own individual advantage. Now, in most cases of a special, and more particularly of a virtuous affection, it can be demonstrated, that the object is a something out of himself and distinct from himself. Take compassion for one instance out of the many. The object of this affection is the relief of another's misery, and, in the fulfilment of this, does the affection meet with its full solace and gratification; that is, in a something altogether external from himself. It is true, that there is an appropriate pleasure in the indulgence of this affection, even as there is in the indulgence of every other; and in proportion, too, to the strength of the affection, will be the greatness of the pleasure. The man who is doubly more compassionate than his fellow, will have doubly a greater enjoyment in the relief of misery; yet that, most assuredly, not because he of the two is the more intently set on his own gratification,

but because he of the two is the more intently set on an outward accomplishment, the relief of another's wretchedness. The truth is, that, just because more compassionate than his fellow, the more intent is he than the other on the object of this affection, and the less intent is he than the other on himself the subject of this affection. His thoughts and feelings are more drawn away *to* the sufferer, and therefore more drawn away *from* himself. He is the most occupied with the object of this affection; and, on that very account, the least occupied with the pleasure of its indulgence. And it is precisely the objective quality of these regards, which stamps upon compassion the character of a disinterested affection. He surely is the most compassionate whose thoughts and feelings are most drawn away to the sufferer, and most drawn away from self; or, in other words, most taken up with the direct consideration of him who is the object of this affection, and least taken up with the reflex consideration of the pleasure that he himself has in the indulgence of it. Yet this prevents not the pleasure from being actually felt; and felt, too, in very proportion to the intensity of the compassion; or, in other words, more felt the less it has been thought of at the time, or the less it has been pursued for its own sake. It seems unavoidable in every affection, that, the more a thing is loved, the greater must be the pleasure of indulging the

love of it: yet it is equally unavoidable, that the greater in that case will be our aim towards the object of the affection, and the less will be our aim towards the pleasure which accompanies its gratification. And thus, to one who reflects profoundly and carefully on these things, it is no paradox that he who has had doubly greater enjoyment than another in the exercise of compassion, is doubly the more disinterested of the two; that he has had the most pleasure in this affection who has been the least careful to please himself with the indulgence of it; that he whose virtuous desires, as being the strongest, have in their gratification ministered to self the greatest satisfaction, has been the least actuated of all his fellows by the wishes, and stood at the greatest distance from the aims of selfishness.*

7. And moreover, there is a just and philosophical sense, in which many of our special affections, besides the virtuous, are alike disinterested with these; even though they have been commonly ranked among the selfish affections of our nature. The proper object of self-love is the good of self; and this calm general regard to our own happiness may be considered, in fact, as the only interested affection to which our nature is competent. The special affections are,

* The purely disinterested character of a right religious affection might be proved by these considerations.

one and all of them, distinct from self-love, both in their objects, and in the real psychological character of the affections themselves. The object of the avaricious affection is the acquirement of wealth; of the resentful, the chastisement of an offender; of the sensual, something appropriate or suited to that corporeal affection which forms the reigning appetite at the time. In none of these, is the good of self the proper discriminative object of the affection; and the mind of him who is under their power, and engaged in their prosecution, is differently employed, from the mind of him, who, at the time, is either devising or doing aught for the general or abstract end of his own happiness. None of these special affections is identical with the affection which has happiness for its object. So far from this, the avaricious man often, conscious of the strength of his propensity, and at the moment of being urged forward by it to new speculations, acknowledges in his heart, that he would be happier far, could he but moderate its violence, and be satisfied with a humbler fortune than that to which his aspirations would carry him. And the resentful man, in the very act of being tempest driven to some furious onset against the person who has affronted or betrayed him, may yet be sensible that, instead of seeking for any benefit to himself, he is rushing on the

destruction of his character, or fortune, or even life. And many is the drunkard who under the goadings of an appetite which he cannot withstand, in place of self-love being the principle, and his own greatest happiness the object, knows himself to be on the road to inevitable ruin. There is an affection which has happiness for its object; but this is not the affection which rules and has the ascendency in any of these instances. These are all special affections, grounded on the affinities which obtain between certain objects and certain parts of human nature; and which cannot be indulged beyond a given extent, without distemper and discomfort to the whole nature; so that, in spite of all the particular gratifications which follow in their train, the man over whom they tyrannize may be unhappy upon the whole. The very distinction between the affection of self-love and the special affections proves that there is a corresponding distinction in their objects; and this again, that many of the latter may be gratified, while the former is disappointed,—or, in other words, that, along with many particular enjoyments, the general state of man may be that of utter and extreme wretchedness. It is therefore a competent question, what those special affections are, which most consist with the general happiness of the mind; and this, notwithstanding that they all possess one circum-

stance in common—the unavoidable pleasure appendant to the gratification of each of them.*

8. This explanation will help us to understand wherein it is that the distinction in point of enjoyment, between a good and an evil affection

* The following are the clear and judicious observations of Sir James Mackintosh on this subject :—

" In contending, therefore, that the benevolent affections are disinterested, no more is claimed for them than must be granted to mere animal appetites and to malevolent passions. Each of these principles alike seeks its own object, for the sake simply of obtaining it. Pleasure is the result of the attainment, but no separate part of the aim of the agent. The desire that another person may be gratified, seeks that outward object alone, according to the general course of human desire. Resentment is as disinterested as gratitude or pity, but not more so. Hunger or thirst may be as much as the purest benevolence, at variance with self-love. A regard to our own general happiness is not a vice, but in itself an excellent quality. It were well if it prevailed more generally over craving and shortsighted appetites. The weakness of the social affections, and the strength of the private desires, properly constitute selfishness ; a vice utterly at variance with the happiness of him who harbours it, and as such, condemned by self-love. There are as few who attain the greatest satisfaction to themselves, as who do the greatest good to others. It is absurd to say with some, that the pleasure of benevolence is selfish, because it is felt by self. Understanding and reasoning are acts of self, for no man can think by proxy; but no man ever called them *selfish*, why? Evidently because they do not *regard* self. Precisely the same reason applies to benevolence. Such an argument is a gross confusion of self, as it is a *subject* of feeling or thought, with self considered as the *object* of either. It is no more just to refer the private appetites to self-love because they commonly promote happiness, than it would be to refer them to self-hatred, in those frequent cases where their gratification obstructs it."

of our nature, properly lies. For there is a certain species of enjoyment common to them all. It were a contradiction in terms to affirm otherwise; for it were tantamount to saying, that an affection may be gratified, without the actual experience of a gratification. There must be some sensation or other of happiness, at the time when a man obtains that which he is seeking for; and if it be not a positive sensation of pleasure, it will at least be the sensation of a relief from pain, as when one meets with the opportunity of wreaking upon its object, that indignation which had long kept his heart in a tumult of disquietude. We therefore would mistake the matter, if we thought, that a state even of thorough and unqualified wickedness was exclusive of all enjoyment—for even the vicious affections must share in that enjoyment, which inseparably attaches to every affection, at the moment of its indulgence. And thus it is, that even in the veriest Pandemonium, might there be lurid gleams of ecstacy, and shouts of fiendish exultation—the merriment of desperadoes in crime, who send forth the outcries of their spiteful and savage delight, when some deep-laid villany has triumphed; or when in some dire perpetration of revenge, they have given full satisfaction and discharge to the malignity of their accursed nature. The assertion therefore may be taken too generally, when it is stated, that there is no enjoyment whatever in

the veriest hell of assembled outcasts; for even there, might there be many separate and specific gratifications. And we must abstract the pleasure essentially involved in every affection, at the instant of its indulgence, and which cannot possibly be disjoined from it, ere we see clearly and distinctively wherein it is that, in respect of enjoyment, the virtuous and vicious affections differ from each other. For it is true, that there is a common resemblance between them; and that, by the universal law and nature of affection, there must be some sort of agreeable sensation, in the act of their obtaining that which they are seeking after. Yet it is no less true, that, did the former affections bear supreme rule in the heart, they would brighten and tranquillize the whole of human existence—whereas, had the latter the entire and practical ascendency, they would distemper the whole man, and make him as completely wretched as he were completely worthless.

9. There is one leading difference then between a virtuous and a vicious affection—that there is always a felt sweetness in the very presence and contact of the former; whereas, in the presence and contact of the latter, there is generally or very often at least, a sensation of bitterness. Let them agree as they may in the undoubted fact of a gratification in the attainment of their respective ends, the affections themselves may

be long in existence and operation before their ends are arrived at; and then it is, we affirm, that if compared, there will be found a wide distinction and dissimilarity between them. The very feeling of kindness is pleasant to the heart; and the very feeling of anger is a painful and corrosive one. The latter, we know, is often said to be a mixed feeling—because of both the pleasure and the pain which are said to enter into it. But it will be found that the pleasure, in this case, lies in the prospect of full and final gratification; and very often, in a sort of current or partial gratification which one may experience beforehand, in the mere vent or utterance by words, of the labouring violence that is within—seeing that words of bitterness, when discharged on the object of our wrath, are sometimes the only, and even the most effective executioners of all the vengeance that we meditate; besides that by their means, we may enlist in our favour the grateful sympathy of other men—thus obtaining a solace to ourselves, and aggravating the punishment of the offender, by exciting against him, in addition to our own hostility, the hostile indignation of his fellows. And thus too is it, that, in the case of anger, there may not only be a completed gratification at the last, by the infliction of a full and satisfactory chastisement; but a gratification, as it were by instalments, with every likely purpose of

retaliation that we may form in our bosoms, and every sentence of keen and reproachful eloquence that may fall from our lips. And so anger has been affirmed to be a mixed emotion, from confounding the pleasure that lies in the gratification of the emotion, with the pleasure that is supposed to lie in the feeling of the emotion. But the truth is, that, apart from the gratification, the emotion is an exceedingly painful one—insomuch that the gratification mainly lies in the removal of a pain, or in the being ridded of a felt uneasiness. Compassion may in the same way be termed a mixed feeling. But on close attention to these two affections and comparison between them, it will be found, that all the pleasure of anger lies in its gratification, and all the pain of it in the feeling itself—whereas all the pain of compassion lies in the disappointment of its gratification, while in the feeling itself there is nought but pleasure. Let the respective gratifications of these two affections—the one, by the fulfilled retaliation of a wrong; the other, by the fulfilled relief of a suffering—let these gratifications be put out of notice altogether, that we might but attend to the yet ungratified feelings themselves: and we cannot imagine a greater difference of state between two minds, than that of one which luxuriates in the tenderness of compassion, and that of another which breathes and is infuriated with the dark passions and the still darker pur-

poses of resentment. Or we may appeal to the experience of the same mind, which at one time may have its hour of meditated kindness, and at another its hour of meditated revenge. We speak of these two, not in the moment of their respective triumphs, not of the sensations attendant on the success of each—but of the direct and instant sensations which lie in the feelings themselves. They form two as distinct states in the moral world, as sunshine and tempest are in the physical world. We have but to name the elements which enter into the composition of each, in order to suggest the utter contrariety which obtains between them—between the calm and placid cheerfulness on the one hand of that heart which is employed in conceiving the generous wishes, or in framing the liberal and fruitful devices of benevolence; and, on the other hand, the turbulence and fierce disorder of the same heart, when burning disdain, or fell and implacable hatred has taken possession of it—the reaction of its own affronted pride, or aggrieved sense of the injury which has been done to it.

10. But perhaps the most favourable moment for comparison between them, is when each is frustrated of its peculiar aim; and so each is sent back upon itself, with that common suffering to which all the affections are liable—the suffering of a disappointment. We shall be at no loss to determine on which side the advantage

lies, if we have either felt or witnessed benevolence in tears, because of the misery which it cannot alleviate; and rage, in the agonies of its defeated impotence, because of the haughty or successful defiance of an enemy, whom with vain hostility it has tried to assail, but cannot reach. We have the example of a good affection under disappointment, in the case of virtuous grief or virtuous indignation; and of a bad affection under disappointment, in the case of envy, when, in spite of every attempt to calumniate or depress its object, he shines forth to universal acknowledgment and applause, in all the lustre of his vindicated superiority. It marks how distinct these two sets of feelings are from each other, that, with the former, even under the pain of disappointment, there is a something in the very taste and quality of the feelings themselves, which acts as an emollient or a charm, and mitigates the painfulness—while, with the latter, there is nought to mitigate, but every thing to exasperate, and more fiercely to agonize. The malignant feelings are no sooner turned inwardly, by the arrest of a disappointment from without, than they eat inwardly; and, when foiled in the discharge of their purposed violence upon others, they recoil—and, without one soothing ingredient to calm the labouring effervescence, they kindle a hell in the heart of the unhappy owner. Internally, there is a celes-

tial peace and satisfaction in virtue, even though in the midst of its outward discomfiture, it be compelled to weep over the unredressed wrongs and sufferings of humanity. On the other hand, the very glance of disappointed malevolence, bespeaks of this evil affection, that, of itself, it is a fierce and fretting distemper of the soul, an executioner of vengeance for all the guilty passions it may have fanned into mischievous activity, and for all the crimes it may have instigated.

11. And this contrast between a good and an evil affection, this superiority of the former to the latter is fully sustained, when, instead of looking to the state of mind which is left by the disappointment of each, we look to the state of mind which is left by their respective gratifications—the one a state of sated compassion, the other of sated resentment. There is one most observable distinction between the states of feeling, by which an act of compassion on the one hand, and of resentment on the other, are succeeded. It is seldom that man feasts his eyes on that spectacle of prostrate suffering which, in a moment of fury, he hath laid at his feet; in the same way that he feasts his eyes on that picture of family comfort which smiles upon him from some cottage home, that his generosity had reared. This looks as if the sweets of benevolence were lasting, whereas the sweets of revengeful malice, such as they are, are in general but mo-

mentary. An act of compassion may extinguish for a time the feeling of compassion, by doing away that suffering which is the object of it; but then it generally is followed up by a feeling of permanent regard. An act of revenge, when executed to the full extent of the desire or purpose, does extinguish and put an end to the passion of revenge; and is seldom, if ever, followed up by a feeling of permanent hatred. An act of kindness but attaches the more, and augments a friendly disposition towards its object. It were both untrue in itself, and unfair to our nature to say, that an act of revenge but exasperates the more, and always augments, or even often augments, a hostile disposition towards its object. It has been said that we hate the man whom we have injured: but whatever the truth of this observation may be, certain it is, that we do not so hate the man of whom we have taken full satisfaction for having injured us; or, if we could imagine aught so monstrous, and happily so rare, as the prolonged, the yet unquelled satisfaction of one, who could be regaled for hours with the sighs of him whom his own hands had wounded; or, for months and years, with the pining destitution of the household whom himself had impoverished and brought low: this were because the measure of the revenge had not equalled the measure of the felt provocation, only perhaps to be appeased and satiated by

death. This, at length, would terminate the emotion. And here a new insight opens upon us into the distinction between a good and a bad affection. Benevolence, itself of immortal quality, would immortalize its objects: malignity, if not appeased by an infliction short of death, would destroy them.* The one is ever strengthening itself upon old objects, and fastening upon new ones; the other is ever extinguishing its resentment towards old objects by the pettier acts of chastisement, or, if nothing short of a capital punishment will appease it, by dying with their death. The exterminating blow, the death which "clears all scores"—this forms the natural and necessary limit even to the fiercest revenge; whereas, the outgoings of benevolence are quite indefinite. In revenge, the affection is successively extinguished; and, if returned, it is upon new objects. In benevolence, the affection is kept up for old objects, while ever open to excitement from new ones; and hence a living and a multiplying power of enjoyment, which is peculiarly its own. On the same principle that we water a shrub just because we had planted it, does our friendship grow and ripen the more towards him on whom we had formerly exercised it. The affection of kindness for each individual

* So true it is, that he who hateth his brother with implacable hatred is a murderer.

object survises the act of kindness, or, rather, is strengthened by the act. Whatever sweetness may have been originally in it, is enhanced by the exercise; and, so far from being stifled by the first gratification, it remains in greater freshness than ever for higher and larger gratifications than before. It is the perennial quality of their gratification, which stamps that superiority on the good affections, we are now contending for. Benevolence both perpetuates itself upon its old objects, and expands itself into a wider circle as it meets with new ones. Not so with revenge, which generally disposes of the old object by one gratification; and then must transfer itself to a new object, ere it can meet with another gratification. Let us grant that each affection has its peculiar walk of enjoyment. The history of the one walk presents us with a series of accumulations; the history of the other with a series of extinctions.

12. But in dwelling on this beautiful peculiarity, by which a good affection is distinguished from a bad one, we are in danger of weakening our immediate argument. We bring forward the matter a great deal too favorably for the malignant desires of the human heart, if, while reasoning on the supposition of an enjoyment, however transitory in their gratification, we give any room for the imagination that even this is unmixed enjoyment. We have already stated, that, of

themselves, and anterior to their gratification, there is a painfulness in these desires; and that when by their gratification we get quit of this painfulness, we might after all obtain little more than a relief from misery. But the truth is, that, generally speaking, we obtain a great deal less on the side of happiness than this; for, in most cases, all that we obtain by the gratification of a malignant passion, is but the exchange of one misery for another; and this apart still from the remorse of an evil perpetration. There is one familiar instance of it, which often occurs in conversation—when, piqued by something offensive in the remark or manner of our fellows, we react with a severity which humbles and overwhelms him. In this case, the pain of the resentment is succeeded by the pain we feel in the spectacle of that distress which ourselves have created; and this, too, aggravated perhaps by the reprobation of all the by-standers, affording thereby a miniature example of the painful alternations which are constantly taking place in the history of moral evil; when the misery of wrong affections is but replaced, to the perpetrator himself, by the misery of the wrong actions to which they have hurried him. It is thus that a life of frequent gratification may, notwithstanding, be a life of intense wretchedness. It may help our imagination of such a state, to conceive of one, subject every hour to the agonies of hunger, with

such a mal-conformation at the same time in his organ of taste, that, in food of every description, he felt a bitter and universal nausea. There were here a constant gratification, yet a constant and severe endurance—a mere alternation of cruel sufferings—the displacement of one set of agonies, by the substitution of other agonies in their room. This is seldom, perhaps never realized in the physical world; but in the moral world it is a great and general phenomenon. The example shows at least the possibility of a constitution, under which a series of incessant gratifications may be nothing better than a restless succession of distress and disquietude; and that such should be the constitution of our moral nature as to make a life of vice a life of vanity and cruel vexation, is strong experimental evidence of Him who ordained this constitution, that He hateth iniquity, that He loveth righteousness.

13. But the peculiarity which we have been incidentally led to notice, is, in itself, pregnant with inference also. We should augur hopefully of the final issues of our moral constitution, as well as conclude favorably of Him who hath ordained it—when we find its workings to be such, that, on the one hand, the feeling of kindness towards an individual object, not only survives, but is indefinitely strengthened by the acts of kindness; and, on the other hand, that, not only does an act of revenge satiate and put an

end to the feeling of revenge, but even, that certain acts of hostility towards the individual object of our hatred will make us relent from this hatred, and at length extinguish it altogether. May we not perceive in this economy a balance in point of tendency, and at length of ultimate effect on the side of virtue? May it not warrant the expectation, that, while benevolence, that great conservative principle of being, has in it a principle conservative of itself as well as of its objects, the outbreakings of evil are but partial and temporary; and that the moral world, viewed as a progressive system and now only in its transition state, has been so constructed as to secure both the perpetuity of all the good affections, and the indefinite expansion of them to new objects and over a larger and ever-widening territory? At all events, whatever reason there may be to fear, that, in the future arrangements of nature and providence, both virtue and vice will be capable of immortality—we might gather from what passes under our eyes, in this rudimental and incipient stage of human existence, that even with our present constitution virtue alone is capable of a blissful immortality. For malice and falsehood carry in them the seeds of their own wretchedness, if not of their own destruction. Only grant the soul to be imperishable; and if the character of the governor is to be gathered from the final issues of the government

over which he presides—it says much for the moral character of Him who framed us, that, unless there be an utter reversal of the nature which Himself has given, then, in respect to the power of conferring enjoyment or of maintaining the soul in its healthiest and happiest mood, it is righteousness alone which endureth for ever, and charity alone which never faileth.

14. And beside taking account of the special enjoyments which attach to the special virtues, we might observe on the general state of that mind, which, under the consistent and comprehensive principle of being or doing what it ought, studies rightly to acquit itself of all the moral obligations. Beside the perpetual feast of an approving conscience, and the constant recurrence of those particular gratifications which attach to the indulgence of every good affection, —is it not quite obvious of every mind which places itself under a supreme regimen of morality, that then, it is in its best possible condition with regard to enjoyment: like a well strung instrument, in right and proper tone, because all its parts are put in right adjustment with each other? If conscience be indeed the superior faculty of our nature, then, every time it is cast down from this pre-eminence, there must be a sensation of painful dissonance; and the whole man feels out of sorts, as one unhinged or denaturalized. This perhaps is the main reason that

a state of well-doing stands associated with a state of well-being; and why the special virtue of temperance is not more closely associated with the health of the body, than the general habit of virtue is with a wholesome and well-conditioned state of the soul. There is then no derangement as it were in the system of our nature—all the powers, whether superior or subordinate, being in their right places, and all moving without discord and without dislocation. It were anticipating our argument, did we refer at present to the confidence and regard wherewith a virtuous man is surrounded in the world. We have not yet spoken of the adaptations to man's moral constitution from without, but only of the inward pleasures and satisfactions which are yielded in the workings of the constitution itself. And surely when we find it to have been so constructed and attuned by its maker, that, in all the movements of virtue there is a felt and grateful harmony, while a certain jarring sense of violence and discomposure ever attends upon the opposite—we cannot imagine how the moral character of that being who Himself devised this constitution and established all its tendencies, can be more clearly or convincingly read, than in phenomena like these.

15. We have already said that the distinction so well established by Butler, between the object of our affection and its accompanying, nay, inseparable pleasure, was the most effectual

argument that could be brought to bear against the selfish system of morals. The virtuous affection that is in a man's breast simply leads him to do what he ought; and in that object he rests and terminates. Like every other affection, there must be a pleasure conjoined with the prosecution of it; and at last, a full and final gratification in the attainment of its object. But the object must be distinct from the pleasure, which itself is founded on a prior suitableness between the mind and its object. When a man is actuated by a virtuous desire; it is the virtue itself that he is seeking, and not the gratification that is in it. His single object is to be or to do rightly—though, the more intent he is upon this object, the greater will, the greater must be his satisfaction if he succeed in it. Nevertheless, it is not the satisfaction which he is seeking; it is the object which yields the satisfaction—the object too for its own sake, and not for the sake of its accompanying or its resulting enjoyment. Nay, the more strongly and therefore the more exclusively set upon virtue for its own sake; the less will he think of its enjoyment, and yet the greater will his actual enjoyment be. In other words, virtue, the more disinterested it is, is the more prolific of happiness to him who follows it; and then it is, that, when freed of all the taints of mercenary selfishness, it yields to its votary the most perfect and supreme enjoyment. Such is the constitution of our nature, that virtue loses

not its disinterested character; and yet man loses not his reward; and the author of this constitution, He who hath ordained all its laws and its consequences, has given signal proof of His own supreme regard for virtue, and therefore of the supreme virtue of His own character, in that He hath so framed the creatures of His will, as that their perfect goodness and perfect happiness are at one. Yet the union of these does not constitute their unity. The union is a contingent appointment of the Deity; and so is at once the evidence and the effect of the goodness that is in His own nature.

16. This then is our second general argument for the moral character of God, grounded on the moral constitution of man; and prior, as yet, to any view of its adaptation to external nature. It is distinct from the first argument, as grounded on the phenomena of conscience, which assumes the office of a judge within the breast, all whose decisions are on the side of benevolence and justice; and which is ever armed with a certain power of enforcement, both in the pains of remorse and the pleasures of self-approbation. These, however, are distinct and ought to be distinguished from the direct pleasures of virtue in itself, and the direct pains of vice in itself, which form truly separate ingredients, on the one hand of a present and often very painful correction, on the other hand, of a present and very precious reward.

Chapter III.

THIRD GENERAL ARGUMENT.

The Power and Operation of Habit.

1. We have as yet been occupied with what may be termed the instant sensations, wherewith morality is beset in the mind of man—with the voice of conscience which goes immediately before, or with the sentence whether of approval or condemnation, which comes immediately after it; and latterly, with those states of feeling which are experienced at the moment when under the power of those affections, to which any moral designation, be it of virtue or vice, is applicable—the pleasure which there is in the very presence and contact of the one, the distaste, the bitterness which there is in the presence and contact of the other.

2. These phenomena of juxtaposition, as they may be termed; these contiguous antecedents and consequents of the moral and the immoral in man, speak strongly the purpose of Him who ordained our mental constitution, in having inserted there such a constant power of command and encouragement on the side of the former, and a like constant operation of checks and discouragement against the latter. But, perhaps, some-

thing more may be collected of the design and character of God, by stretching forward our observation prospectively in the history of man, and so extending our regards to the more distant consequences of virtue or vice, both on the frame of his character and the state of his enjoyments. By studying these posterior results, we approximate our views towards the final issues of that administration under which we are placed. That defensive apparatus, wherewith the embryo seed of plants is guarded and protected, might indicate a special care or design in the preserver of it. What that design particularly is comes to be clearly and certainly known, when, in the future history of the plant, we learn what the functions of the seed are, after it has come to maturity; and then observe, that, had it been suffered universally to perish, it would have led, —not to the mortality of the individual, for that is already an inevitable law, but to the extinction and mortality of the species.

3. For tracing forward man's moral history, or the changes which take place in his moral state, it is necessary that we should advert to the influence of habit. Yet it is not properly the philosophy of habit wherewith our argument is concerned, but with the leading facts of its practical operation. A beneficial effect might still remain an evidence of the divine goodness, by whatever steps it should be efficiently or physi-

cally brought about—its power in this way depending not on the question how it is, but on the fact that so it is. It were really, therefore, deviating from our own strict and pertinent line of enquiry, did we stop to discuss the philosophic theory of habit, or suspend our own independent reasoning till that theory was settled—beside most unwisely and unnecessarily attaching to our theme, all the discredit of an obscure or questionable speculation. It is with palpable and sure results both in the material and mental world, more than with the recondite processes in either, that theism has chiefly to do; and it is by the former more than by the latter that the cause of theism is upholden.

4. We might only observe, in passing, that the modification introduced by Dr. Thomas Brown into the theory of habit, was perhaps uncalled for, even for the accomplishment of his own purpose, which was to demonstrate that it required no peculiar or original law of the human constitution to account for its phenomena. He resolves, and we are disposed to think rightly, the whole operation of habit into the law of suggestion—only, he would extend that law to states of feelings, as well as to thoughts or states of thoughts.* We are all aware that if two

* The following is the passage taken from his forty-third lecture, in which Dr. Brown seems to connect feeling with feeling by the same mental law which connects thought with thought.

objects have been seen or thought of together on any former occasion, then the thought of one of them is apt to suggest the thought of the other, and the more apt the more frequently that the suggestion has taken place—insomuch, that, if the suggestion have taken place very often, we shall find it extremely difficult, if not impossible, to break the succession between the thought which suggests and the thought which is suggested by it. Now Dr. Brown has conceived it necessary to extend this principle to feelings as well as thoughts—insomuch, that, if on a former occasion a certain object have been followed up by a certain feeling, or even if one feeling have been followed up by another, then the thought of the object introduces the feeling, or the one feeling introduces the other feeling into the mind, on the same principle that thought introduces thought. Now we should rather be inclined to hold that thought introduces feeling,

" To explain the influence of habit in increasing the tendency to certain actions I must remark—what I have already more than once repeated—that the suggesting influence which is usually expressed in the phrase *association of ideas*, though that very improper phrase would seem to limit it to our ideas or conceptions only, and has unquestionably produced a mistaken belief of this partial operation of a general influence—is not limited to those more than to any other states of mind, but occurs also with equal force in other feelings, which are not commonly termed ideas or conceptions; that our desires or other emotions, for example, may, like them, form a part of our trains of suggestion," &c. See another equally ambiguous passage in his sixty-fourth lecture.

not in consequence of the same law of suggestion whereby thought introduces thought, but in virtue of the direct power which lies in the object of the thought to excite that feeling. When a voluptuous object awakens a voluptuous feeling, this is not by suggestion, but by a direct influence of its own. When the picture of that voluptuous object awakens the same voluptuous feeling, we would not ascribe it to suggestion, but still put it down to the power of the object, whether presented or only represented, to awaken certain emotions. And as little would we ascribe the excitement of the feeling to suggestion, but still to the direct and original power of the object—though it were pictured to us only in thought, instead of being pictured to us in visible imagery. In like manner, when the thought of an injury awakens in us anger, even as the injury itself did at the moment of its infliction, we should not ascribe this to that peculiar law which is termed the law of suggestion, and which undoubtedly connects thought with thought. But we should ascribe it wholly to that law which connects an object with its appropriate emotion—whether that object be present to the senses, or have only been recalled by the memory and is present to the thoughts. We sustain an injury, and we feel resentment in consequence, without, surely, the law of suggestion having had aught to do with the sequence.

We see the aggressor afterwards, and our anger is revived against him, and with this particular succession the law of suggestion has certainly had to do—not, however, in the way of thought suggesting feeling, but only in the way of thought suggesting thought. In truth it is a succession of three terms. The sight of the man awakens a recollection of the injury; and the thought of the injury awakens the emotion. The first sequence, or that which obtains between the first and second term, is a pure instance of the suggestion of thought by thought, or, to speak in the old language, of the association of ideas. The second sequence, or that which obtains between the middle and last term, is still, Dr. Brown would say, an instance of suggestion, but of thought suggesting the feeling wherewith it was formerly accompanied. Whereas, in our apprehension, it is due, not to the law of suggestion, but to the law which connects an object, whether present at the time or thought upon afterwards, with its counterpart emotion. Still the result is the same, however differently accounted for. One can think, surely, of the resentment which now occupies him, as well as he can think of a past resentment—indeed it is difficult to imagine how he can feel a resentment without thinking of it. Let some one thought, then, by the proper law of suggestion, have introduced the thought of an injury that had been done to us; this second

thought introduces the feeling of resentment, not by the law of suggestion, but by the law which relates an object, whether present or thought upon, to its appropriate emotion; this emotion is thought upon, and, not the emotion, but the thought of the emotion recalls the thought of the first emotion that was felt at the original infliction of the injury; and this thought again recalls to us the thought of the injury itself, and perhaps the thought of other or similar injuries, which, as at the first, excites anew the feeling of anger, but, at this particular step, by means of a law different from that of suggestion, even the law of our emotions, in virtue of which, certain objects, when present in any way to the cognizance of the understanding, awaken certain sensibilities in the heart. It is thus that thoughts and feelings might reciprocally introduce each other, not by means of but one law of suggestion extending in common to them both, but by the intermingling of two laws in this repeating or circulating process,—even the law of suggestion, acting only upon the thoughts; and the law of emotion, by which certain objects, when presented to the senses or to the memory, have the power to awaken certain correspondent emotions. We in this way get quit of the mysticism which attaches to the notion of mere feelings either suggesting or being suggested by other feelings, separately from thoughts—more especially when,

by the association of thoughts or of ideas alone, and the direct power which lies in the objects of these ideas to awaken certain emotions, all the phenomena are capable of being explained. A certain thought or object may suggest the thought of a former provocation; this thought might excite a feeling of resentment; the resentment, thus felt or thought upon, might send back the mind to a still more vivid impression of its original cause; and this again might prolong or waken the resentment anew, and in greater freshness than before. The ultimate effect might be a fierce and fiery effervescence of irascible feeling. Yet not by the operation of one law, but of two distinct laws in the human constitution; the first that, in virtue of which, thoughts suggest thoughts; the second that, in virtue of which, the object thus thought upon awakens the emotion that is suited to it.

5. But though for once we have thus adverted to the strict philosophy of the subject, it will be apparent, that, in this instance, it is of no practical necessity for the purposes of our argument; and it is truly the same in many other instances, where, if instead of reasoning theologically on the palpable operations of the mechanism, we should reason scientifically on the *modus operandi*, we would run into really irrelevant discussions. The theme of our present chapter is the effects of Habit, in as far as these effects serve to in-

dicate the design or character of Him who is the author of our mental constitution. It matters not to any conclusion of ours, by what recondite, or, it may be, yet undiscovered process these effects are brought about; and whether the common theory, or that of Dr. Brown, or that again as modified and corrected by ourselves, is the just one. It is enough to know, that, if any given process of intermingled thought and feeling have been described by us once, there are laws at work, which, on the first step of that process again recurring, would incline us to describe the whole of the process over again; and with the greater power and certainty, the more frequently that process has been repeated. We are perfectly sure that the more frequently any particular sequence between thought and thought may have occurred, the more readily will it recur;—so that when once the first thought has entered the mind, we may all the more confidently reckon on its being followed up by the second. This we hold enough for explaining the ever recurring force and facility, wherewith feelings also will arise and be followed up by their indulgence—and that, just in proportion to the frequency wherewith in given circumstances they have been awakened and indulged formerly. In as far as the objects of gratification are the exciting causes which stimulate and awaken the desires of gratification; then, any process which

ensures the presence and application of the causes, will also ensure the fulfilment of the effects which result from them. If it be the presence or perception of the wine that stands before us which stirs up the appetite; and if, instead of acting on the precept of looking not unto the wine when it is red, we continue to look till the appetite be so enflamed that the indulgence becomes inevitable—then, as we looked at it continuously when present, will we, by the law of suggestion, be apt to think of it continuously when absent. If the one continuity was not broken by any considerations of principle or prudence—so the less readily will the other continuity be broken in like manner. When we revisit the next social company, we shall probably resign ourselves to the very order of sensations that we did formerly; and the more surely, the oftener that that order has already been described by us. And as the order of objects with their sensations when present, so is the order of thoughts with their desires when absent. This order forces itself upon the mind with a strength proportional to the frequency of its repetition; and desires, when not evaded by the mind shifting its attention away from the objects of them, can only be appeased by their indulgence.

6. It is thus that he who enters on a career of vice, enters on a career of headlong degeneracy. If even for once we have described that process

of thought and feeling, which leads, whether through the imagination or the senses, from the first presentation of a tempting object to a guilty indulgence—this of itself establishes a probability, that, on the recurrence of that object, we shall pass onward by the same steps to the same consummation. And it is a probability ever strengthening with every repetition of the process, till at length it advances towards the moral certainty of a helpless surrender to the tyranny of those evil passions, which we cannot resist, just because the will itself is in thraldom, and we choose not to resist them. It is thus that we might trace the progress of intemperance and licentiousness, and even of dishonesty, to whose respective solicitations we have yielded at the first—till, by continuing to yield, we become the passive, the prostrate subjects of a force that is uncontrollable, only because we have seldom or never in good earnest tried to control it. It is not that we are struck of a sudden with moral impotency; but we are gradually benumbed into it. The power of temptation has not made instant seizure upon the faculties, or taken them by storm. It proceeds by an influence that is gently and almost insensibly progressive—just as progressive in truth, as the association between particular ideas is strengthened by the frequency of their succession. But even as that association may at length become inveterate, inso-

much that when the first idea finds entry into the mind, we cannot withstand the importunity wherewith the second insists upon following it; so might the moral habit become alike inveterate —thoughts succeeding thoughts, and urging onward their counterpart desires, in that wonted order, which had hitherto connected the beginning of a temptation with its full and final victory. At each repetition, would we find it more difficult to break this order, or to lay an arrest upon it—till at length, as the fruit of this wretched regimen, its unhappy patient is lorded over by a power of moral evil, which possesses the whole man, and wields an irresistible or rather an unresisted ascendency over him.

7. But this melancholy process, leading to a vicious indulgence, may be counteracted by an opposite process of resistance, though with far greater facility at the first—yet a facility ever augmenting, in proportion as the effectual resistance of temptation is persevered in. That balancing moment, at which pleasure would allure, and conscience is urging us to refrain, may be regarded as the point of departure or divergency, whence one or other of the two processes will take their commencement. Each of them consists in a particular succession of ideas with their attendant feelings; and whichever of them may happen to be described once, has, by the law of suggestion, the greater chance, in the

same circumstances, of being described over again. Should the mind dwell on an object of allurement, and the considerations of principle not be entertained—it will pass onward from the first incitement to the final and guilty indulgence by a series of stepping stones, each of which will present itself more readily in future; and with less chance of arrest or interruption by the suggestions of conscience than before. But should these suggestions be admitted, and far more should they prevail—then, on the principle of association, will they be all the more apt to intervene, on the repetition of the same circumstances; and again break that line of continuity, which, but for this intervention, would have led from a temptation to a turpitude or a crime. If on the occurrence of a temptation formerly, conscience did interpose, and represent the evil of a compliance, and so impress the man with a sense of obligation, as led him to dismiss the fascinating object from the presence of his mind, or to hurry away from it—the likelihood is, that the recurrence of a similar temptation will suggest the same train of thoughts and feelings and lead to the same beneficial result; and this is a likelihood ever increasing with every repetition of the process. The train which would have terminated in a vicious indulgence, is dispossessed by the train which conducts to a resolution and an act of virtuous self-denial. The thoughts

which tend to awaken emotions and purposes on the side of duty find readier entrance into the mind; and the thoughts which awaken and urge forward the desire of what is evil more readily give way. The positive force on the side of virtue is augmented, by every repetition of the train which leads to a virtuous determination. The resistance to this force on the side of vice is weakened, in proportion to the frequency wherewith that train of suggestions which would have led to a vicious indulgence, is broken and discomfited. It is thus that when one is successfully resolute in his opposition to evil, the power of making the achievement and the facility of the achievement itself are both upon the increase; and virtue makes double gain to herself, by every separate conquest which she may have won. The humbler attainments of moral worth are first mastered and secured; and the aspiring disciple may pass onward in a career that is quite indefinite to nobler deeds and nobler sacrifices.

8. And this law of habit when enlisted on the side of righteousness, not only strengthens and makes sure our resistance to vice, but facilitates the most arduous performances of virtue. The man whose thoughts, with the purposes and doings to which they lead, are at the bidding of conscience, will, by frequent repetition, at length describe the same track almost spontaneously—

even as in physical education, things, laboriously learned at the first, come to be done at last without the feeling of an effort. And so, in moral education, every new achievement of principle smooths the way to future achievements of the same kind; and the precious fruit or purchase of each moral victory is to set us on higher and firmer vantage-ground for the conquests of principle in all time coming. He who resolutely bids away the suggestions of avarice, when they come into conflict with the incumbent generosity; or the suggestions of voluptuousness, when they come into conflict with the incumbent self-denial; or the suggestions of anger, when they come into conflict with the incumbent act of magnanimity and forbearance—will at length obtain, not a respite only, but a final deliverance from their intrusion. Conscience, the longer it has made way over the obstacles of selfishness and passion---the less will it give way to these adverse forces, themselves weakened by the repeated defeats which they have sustained in the warfare of moral discipline: Or, in other words, the oftener that conscience makes good the supremacy which she claims—the greater would be the work of violence, and less the strength for its accomplishment, to cast her down from that station of practical guidance and command which of right belongs to her. It is just because, in virtue of the law of suggestion, those

trains of thought and feeling, which connect her first biddings with their final execution, are the less exposed at every new instance to be disturbed, and the more likely to be repeated over again, that every good principle is more strengthened by its exercise, and every good affection is more strengthened by its indulgence than before. The acts of virtue ripen into habits; and the goodly and permanent result is, the formation or establishment of a virtuous character.

9. This then forms the subject of our third general argument. The voice of authority within, bidding us to virtue; and the immediate delights attendant on obedience, certainly, speak strongly for the moral character of that administration under which we are placed. But, by looking to posterior and permanent results, we have the advantage of viewing the system of that administration in progress. Instead of the insulated acts, we are led to regard the abiding and the accumulating consequences—and by stretching forward our observation through larger intervals and to more distant points in the moral history of men; we are in likelier circumstances for obtaining a glimpse of their final destination; and so of seizing on this mighty and mysterious secret—the reigning policy of the divine government, whence we might collect the character of Him who hath ordained it. And

surely, it is of prime importance to be noted in this examination, that by every act of virtue we become more powerful for its service; and by every act of vice we become more helplessly its slaves. Or, in other words, were these respective moral regimens fully developed into their respective consummations, it would seem, as if by the one, we should be conducted to that state, where the faculty within, which is felt to be the rightful, would also become the reigning sovereign, and then we should have the full enjoyment of all the harmony and happiness attendant upon virtue—whereas, by the other, those passions of our nature felt to be inferior, would obtain the lawless ascendency, and subject their wretched bondsmen to the turbulence, and the agony, and the sense of degradation, which, by the very constitution of our being, are inseparable from the reign of moral evil.

10. We might not fully comprehend the design or meaning of a process, till we have seen the end of it. Had there been no death, the mystery of our present state might have been somewhat alleviated. We might then have seen, in bolder relief and indelible character, the respective consummations of vice and virtue—perhaps the world partitioned into distinct moral territories, where the habit of many centuries had given fixture and establishment, first, to a society of the upright, now in the firm posses-

sion of all goodness, as the well-earned result of that wholesome discipline through which they had passed; and, second, to a society of the reprobate, now hardened in all iniquity, and abandoned to the violence of evil passions no longer to be controlled and never to be eradicated. We might then have witnessed the peace, the contentment, the universal confidence and love, the melody of soul, that reigned in the dwellings of the righteous; and contrasted these with the disquietudes, the strifes, the fell and fierce collisions of injustice and mutual disdain and hate implacable, the frantic bacchanalian excesses with their dreary intervals of remorse and lassitude, which kept the other region in perpetual anarchy, and which, constituted as we are, must trouble or dry up all the well-springs of enjoyment, whether in the hearts of individuals or in the bosom of families. We could have been at no loss, to have divined, from the history and state of such a world, the policy of its ruler. We should have recognized in that peculiar economy, by which every act whether of virtue or vice, made its performer still more virtuous or more vicious than before, a moral remuneration on the one hand and a moral penalty on the other—with an enhancement of all the consequences, whether good or evil, which flowed from each of them. We could not have mistaken the purposes and mind

of the Deity—when we saw thus palpably, and through the demonstrations of experience, the ultimate effects of these respective processes; and, in this total diversity of character, with a like total diversity of condition, were made to perceive, that righteousness was its own eternal reward, and that wickedness was followed up, and that for ever, with the bitter fruit of its own ways.

11. Death so far intercepts the view of this result, that it is not here the object of sight or of experience. Still, however, it remains the object of our likely anticipation. The truth is, that the process which we are now contemplating, the process by which character is formed and strengthened and perpetuated, suggests one of the strongest arguments within compass of the light of nature, for the immortality of the soul. In the system of the world we behold so many adaptations, not only between the faculties of sentient beings, and their counterpart objects in external nature; but between every historical progression in nature, and a fulfilment of corresponding interest or magnitude which it ultimately lands in—that we cannot believe of man's moral history, as if it terminated in death. More especially when we think of the virtuous character, how laboriously it is reared, and how slowly it advances to perfection; but, at length, how indefinite its capabilities of power and of

enjoyment are, after this education of habits has been completed—it seems like the breach of a great and general analogy, if man is to be suddenly arrested on his way to the magnificent result, for which it might well be deemed that the whole of his life was but a preparation; having just reached the full capacity of an enjoyment, of which he had only been permitted, in this evanescent scene, a few brief and passing foretastes. It were like the infliction of a violence on the continuity of things, of which we behold no similar example, if a being so gifted were thus left to perish in the full maturity of his powers and moral acquisitions. The very eminence that he has won, we naturally look upon as the guarantee and the precursor of some great enlargement beyond it—warranting the hope, therefore, that Death but transforms without destroying him, or, that the present is only an embryo or rudimental state, the final developement of which is in another and future state of existence.

12. This is not the right place for a full exposition of this argument. We might only observe, that there is an evidence of man's immortality, in the moral state and history of the bad upon earth, as well as of the good. The truth is, that nature's most vivid anticipations of a conscious futurity on the other side of death, are the forebodings of guilty

fear, not the bright anticipations of confident and rejoicing hope. We speak not merely of the unredressed wrongs inflicted by the evil upon the righteous, and which seem to demand an afterplace of reparation and vengeance. Beside those unsettled questions between man and man, which death breaks off at the middle, and for the adjustment of which one feels as if it were the cry of eternal justice that there should be a reckoning afterwards—beside these, there is felt, more directly and vividly still, the sense of a yet unsettled controversy, between the sinner and the God whom he has offended. The notion of immortality is far more powerfully and habitually suggested by the perpetual hauntings or misgivings of this sort of undefined terror, by the dread of a coming penalty—rather than by the consciousness of merit, or of a yet unsatisfied claim to a well-earned reward. Nor is the argument at all lessened by that observed phenomenon in the history of guilt, the decay of conscience; a hebetude, if it may be so termed, of the moral sensibilities, which keeps pace with the growth of a man's wickedness, and, at times, becomes quite inveterate towards the termination of his mortal career. The very torpor and tranquillity of such a state, would only appear all the more emphatically to tell, that a day of account is yet to come, when, instead of rioting, as here-

tofore, in the impunity of a hardihood that shields him alike from reproach and fear, conscience will at length re-awaken to upbraid him for his misdoings; at once the assertor of its own cause, and the executioner of its own sentence. And even the most desperate in crime, do experience, at times, such gleams and resuscitations of moral light, as themselves feel to be the precursors of a revelation still more tremendous—when their own conscience, fully let loose upon them, shall, in the hands of an angry God, be a minister of fiercest vengeance. Certain it is, that, if death, instead of an entire annihilation, be but a removal to another and a different scene of existence, we see in this, when combined with the known laws and processes of the mind, the possibility, at least, of such a consummation. There is much in the business, and entertainments, and converse, and day-light of that urgent and obtruding world by which we are surrounded, to carry off the attention of the mind from its own guiltiness, and so, to suspend that agony, which, when thrown back upon itself and dissevered from all its objects of gratification, will be felt, without mitigation and without respite. In the busy whirl of life, the mind, drawn upon in all directions, can find, outwardly and abroad, the relief of a constant diversion from the misery of its own internal processes. But

a slight change in its locality or its circumstances, would deliver it up to the full burden and agony of these; nor can we imagine a more intense and intolerable wretchedness, than that which would ensue, simply by rescinding the connexion which obtains in this world between a depraved mind and its external means of gratification---when, forced inwardly on its own haunted tenement, it met with nothing there but revenge unsatiated, and raging appetites, that never rest from their unappeased fermentation; and withal, to this perpetual sense of want, a pungent and pervading sense of worthlessness. It is the constant testimony of criminals, that, in the horrors and the tedium of solitary imprisonment, they undergo the most appalling of all penalties—a penalty, therefore, made up of moral elements alone; as neither pain, nor hunger, nor sickness, necessarily forms any of its ingredients. It strikingly demonstrates the character of Him who so constructed our moral nature, that from the workings of its mechanism alone, there should be evolved a suffering so tremendous on the children of iniquity, insomuch that a sinner meets with sorest vengeance when simply left to the fruit of his own ways—whether by the death which carries his disembodied spirit to its Tartarus; or by a resurrection to another scene of existence, where, in full possession of his earthly

habits and earthly passions, he is nevertheless doomed to everlasting separation from their present counterpart and earthly enjoyments.

13. There is a distinction sometimes made between the natural and arbitrary rewards of virtue, or between the natural and arbitrary punishments of vice. The arbitrary is exemplified in the enactments of human law; there in general being no natural or necessary connexion between the crimes which it denounces, and the penalties which it ordains for them—as between the fine, or the imprisonment, or the death, upon the one hand; and the act of violence, whether more or less outrageous, upon the other. The natural again is exemplified in the workings of the human constitution; there being a connexion, in necessity and nature, between the temper which prompted the act of violence, and the wretchedness which it inflicts on him who is the unhappy subject, in his own bosom, of its fierce and restless agitations. It is thus that not only is virtue termed its own reward, but vice its own greatest plague or self-tormentor. We have no information of the arbitrary rewards or punishments in a future state, but from revelation alone. But of the natural, we have only to suppose, that the existing constitution of man, and his existing habits, shall be borne with him to the land of eternity; and we may inform

ourselves now of these, by the experience of our own felt and familiar nature. Our own experience can tell that the native delights of virtue, unaided by any high physical gratifications, and only if not disturbed by grievous physical annoyances, were enough of themselves to constitute an elysium of pure and perennial happiness: and again, that the native agonies of vice, unaided by any inflictions of physical suffering, and only if unalleviated by a perpetual round of physical enjoyments, were enough of themselves to constitute a dire and dreadful Pandemonium. They are not judicially awarded, but result from the workings of that constitution which God hath given to us; and they speak as decisively the purpose and character of Him who is the author of that constitution—as would any code of jurisprudence proclaimed from the sanctuary of heaven, and which assigned to virtue on the one hand, the honours and rewards of a blissful immortality, to vice on the other a place of anguish among the outcasts of a fiery condemnation.

Chapter IV.

On the General Adaptation of External Nature to the Moral Constitution of Man.

1. It needs but a cursory observation of life to be made sensible, that man has not been endowed with a conscience, without, at the same time, being placed in a theatre which afforded the most abundant scope and occasion for its exercise. The truth is, that, in the multitude of fellow-beings by whom he is surrounded, and in the manifold variety of his social and family relations, there is a perpetual call on his sense of right and wrong---insomuch, that to the doings of every hour throughout his waking existence, one or other of these moral designations is applicable. It might have been stigmatized as the example of a mal-adjustment in the circumstances of our species, had man been provided with a waste feeling or a waste faculty, which remained dormant and unemployed from the want of counterpart objects that were suited to it. The wisdom of God admits of glorious vindication against any such charge in the physical department

of our nature, where the objective and subjective have been made so marvellously to harmonize with each other; there being, in the material creation, sights of infinitely varied loveliness, and sounds of as varied melody, and many thousand tastes and odours of exquisite gratification, and distinctions innumerable of touch and feeling, to meet the whole compass and diversity of the human senses—multiplying without end, both the notice that we receive from external things, and the enjoyments that we derive from them. And as little in the moral department of our nature, is any of its faculties, and more especially the great and master faculty of all, left to languish from the want of occupation. The whole of life, in fact, is crowded with opportunities for its employment—or, rather, instead of being represented as the subject of so many distinct and ever-recurring calls, conscience may well be represented as the constant guide and guardian of human life; and, for the right discharge of this its high office, as being kept on the alert perpetually. The creature on whom conscience hath laid the obligation of refraining from all mischief, and rendering to society all possible good, lives under a responsibility which never for a single moment is suspended. He may be said to possess a continuity of moral being; and morality whether of a good or evil hue, tinges the

whole current of his history. It is a thing of constancy as well as a thing of frequency—for, even when not carried forth into action, it is not dormant; but possesses the mind in the form of a cherished purpose or cherished principle, or, as the Romans expressed it, of a perpetual will either to that which is good or evil. But over and above this, the calls to action are innumerable. In the wants of others; in their powers of enjoyment; in their claims on our equity, our protection, or our kindness; in the various openings and walks of usefulness; in the services which even the humblest might render to those of their own family, or household, or country; in the application, of that comprehensive precept, to do good unto all men as we have opportunity—we behold a prodigious number and diversity of occasions for the exercise of moral principle It is possible that the lessons of a school may not be arduous enough nor diversified enough for the capacity of a learner: But this cannot be affirmed of that school of discipline, alike arduous and unremitting, to which the great author of our being hath introduced us. Along with the moral capacity by which He hath endowed us, He hath provided a richly furnished gymnasium for its exercises and its trials—where we may earn, if not the triumphs of virtue at least some delicious foretastes of that full and final blessedness for which

the scholarship of human life, with its manifold engagements and duties, is so obviously fitted to prepare us.

2. But let us now briefly state the adaptation of external nature to the moral constitution of man, with a reference to that three-fold generality which we have already expounded. We have spoken of the supremacy of conscience, and of the inherent pleasures and pains of virtue and vice, and of the law and operation of habit—as forming three distinct arguments for the moral goodness of Him, who hath so constructed our nature, that by its workings alone, man should be so clearly and powerfully warned to a life of righteousness—should in the native and immediate joys of rectitude, earn so precious a reward—and, finally, should be led onward to such a state of character, in respect of its confirmed good or confirmed evil, as to afford one of the likeliest prognostications which nature offers to our view of an immortality beyond the grave, where we shall abundantly reap the consequence of our present doings, in either the happiness of established virtue, or the utter wretchedness and woe of our then inveterate depravity. But hitherto we have viewed this nature of man, rather as an individual and insulated constitution, than as a mechanism acted upon by any forces or influences from without. It is in this latter aspect that we are

henceforth to regard it; and now only it is that we enter on the proper theme of our volume, or that the adaptations of the objective to the subjective begin to open upon us. It will still be recollected, however,* that in our view of external nature, we comprehend, not merely all that is external to the world of mind—for this would have restricted us to the consideration of those reciprocal actings which take place between mind and matter. We further comprehend all that is external to one individual mind, and therefore the other minds which are around it; and so we have appropriated, as forming a part of our legitimate subject, the actings and reactings that take place between man and man in society.

3. And first, in regard to the power and sensibility of conscience, there is a most important influence brought to bear on each individual possessor of this faculty from without, and by his fellow men. It will help us to understand it aright, if we reflect on a felt and familiar experience of all men—even the effect of a very slight notice, often of a single word from one of our companions, to recall some past scene or transaction of our lives, which had long vanished from our remembrance; and would, but for this reawakening, have remained in deep oblivion to the end of our days. The phenomenon can easily be explained by the laws of suggestion.

* See Introductory Chapter, 1, 2, 3.

Our wonted trains of thought might never have conducted the mind to any thought or recollection of the event in question—whereas, on the occurrence of even a very partial intimation, all the associated circumstances come into vivid recognition; and we are transported back again to the departed realities of former years, that had lain extinct within us for so long a period, and might have been extinct for ever, if not lighted up again by an extraneous application. How many are the days since early boyhood, of which not one trace or vestige now abides upon the memory. Yet perhaps there is not one of these days, the history of which could not be recalled, by means of some such external or foreign help to the remembrance of it. Let us imagine for example, that a daily companion had, unknown to us, kept a minute and statistical journal of all the events we personally shared in; and the likelihood is, that, if admitted to the perusal of this document, even after the lapse of half a life time, our memory would depone to many thousand events which had else escaped, into utter and irrecoverable forgetfulness. It is certainly remarkable, that, on some brief utterance by another, the stories of former days should suddenly reappear, as if in illumined characters, on the tablet from which they had so totally faded; that the mention of a single circumstance, if only the link of a train, should conjure to life

again a whole host of sleeping recollections: And so, in each of our fellow men, might we have a remembrancer, who can vivify our consciousness anew, respecting scenes and transactions of our former history which had long gone by; and which, after having vanished once from a solitary mind left to its own processes, would have vanished everlastingly.

4. It is thus, that, not only can one man make instant translation of his own memory; but on certain subjects, he can even make instant translation of his own intelligence into the mind of another. A shrewd discerner of the heart, when laying open its heretofore unrevealed mysteries, makes mention of things which at the moment we feel to be novelties; but which, almost at the same moment, are felt and recognized by us as truths—and that, not because we receive them upon his authority, but on the independent view that ourselves have of their own evidence. His utterance, in fact, has evoked from the cell of their imprisonment, remembrances, which but for him, might never have been awakened; and which, when thus summoned into existence, are so many vouchers for the perfect wisdom and truth of what he tells. A thousand peculiarities of life and character, till then unnoticed, are no sooner heard by us, although for the first time in our lives, than they shine before the mind's eye, in the light of a satisfying demonstration.

And the reason is, that the materials of their proof have been actually stored up within us, by the history and experience of former years, though in chambers of forgetfulness—whence, however, they are quickly and vividly called forth, as if with the power of a talisman, by the voice of him, who no sooner announces his proposition, than he suggests the by-gone recollections of our own which serve to confirm it. The pages of the novelist, or the preacher, or the moral essayist, though all of them should deal in statements alone, without the formal allegation of evidence, may be informed throughout with evidence, notwithstanding; and that, because each of them speaks to the consciousness of his readers, unlocking a treasury of latent recollections, which no sooner start again into being, than they become witnesses for the sagacity and admirable sense of him with whom all this luminous and satisfying converse is held. It is like the holding up of a mirror, or the response of an echo to a voice. What the author discovers, the reader promptly and presently discerns. The one utters new things; but that light of immediate manifestation in which the other beholds them, is struck out of old materials which himself too had long since appropriated, but laid up in a dormitory, where they might have slumbered for ever—had it not been for that voice which charmed them anew into life

and consciousness. This is the only way in which the instant recognition of truths before unheard of and unknown can possibly be explained. It is because their evidence lies enveloped in the reminiscences of other days, which had long passed into oblivion; but are again presented to the notice of the mind by the power of association.

5. This is properly a case of intellectual rather than of moral adaptation; and is only now adverted to for the purpose of illustration. For a decayed conscience is susceptible of like resuscitation with a decayed memory. In treating of the effects of habit, we briefly noticed* the gradual weakening of conscience, as the indulgences of vice were persisted in. Its remonstrances, however ineffectual, may, at the first, have had a part in that train of thought and feeling, which commences with a temptation, and is consummated in guilt; but in proportion to the frequency, wherewith the voice of conscience is hushed, or overborne, or refused entertainment by the mind, in that proportion does it lift a feebler and a fainter voice afterwards—till at length it may come to be unheard; and any suggestions from this faculty may either pass unheeded, or perhaps drop out of the train altogether. It is thus that many a foul or horrid

* See Chap. iii. 6. of this Section.

immorality may come at length to be perpetrated without the sense or feeling of its enormity. Conscience, with the repeated stiflings it has undergone, may, as if on the eve of extinction, have ceased from its exercises. This moral insensibility forms, in truth, one main constituent in the hardihood of crime. The conscience is cradled into a state of stupefaction; and the criminal, now a desperado in guilt, may prosecute his secret depravities, with no relentings from within, and no other dread upon his spirit, than that of discovery by his fellow-men.

6. And it is on the event of such discovery, that we meet with the phenomenon in question. When that guilt, to which he had himself become so profoundly insensible, is at length beheld in the light of other minds—it is then that the scales are made to fall from the eyes of the offender; and he, as if suddenly awoke from lethargy, stands aghast before the spectacle of his own worthlessness. It is not the shame of detection, nor the fear of its consequences, which forms the whole of this distress. These may aggravate the suffering; but they do not altogether compose it—for often besides, is there a resurrection of the moral sensibilities within the bosom of the unhappy criminal, as if relumed at the touch of sympathy, with the pronounced judgments and feelings of other men. When their unperverted and unwarped consciences,

because free from the delusions which encompass his own, give forth a righteous sentence—they enlist his conscience upon their side, which then reasserts its power, and again speaks to him in a voice of thunder. When that continuous train between the first excitement of some guilty passion, and its final gratification, from which the suggestions of the moral faculty had been so carefully excluded, is thus arrested and broken—then does conscience, as if emancipated from a spell, at times recover from the infatuation which held it; and utter reproaches of its own, more terrible to the sinner's heart, than all the execrations of general society. And whatever shall forcibly terminate the guilty indulgence, may, by interrupting the accustomed series of thoughts and purposes and passions, also dissipate and put an end to the inveteracy of this moral or spiritual blindness. The confinement of a prison-house may do it. The confinement of a death-bed may do it. And accordingly, on these occasions, does conscience, after an interval it would seem, not of death but only of suspended animation, come forth with the might of an avenger, and make emphatic representation of her wrongs.

7. But this influence which we have attempted to exhibit in bold relief, by means of rare and strong exemplification, is in busy and perpetual operation throughout society—and that, more

to prevent crime than to punish it; rather, to maintain the conscience in freshness and integrity, than to reanimate it from a state of decay, or to recal its aberrations. Indeed its restorative efficacy, though far more striking, is not so habitual, nor in the whole amount so salutary, as its counteractive efficacy. The truth is, that we cannot frequent the companionships of human life, without observing the constant circulation and reciprocal play of the moral judgments among men—with whom there is not a more favourite or familiar exercise, than that of discussing the conduct and pronouncing on the deserts of each other. It is thus that every individual, liable in his own case to be misled or blinded by the partialities of interest and passion, is placed under the observation and guardianship of his fellows—who, exempted from his personal or particular bias, give forth a righteous sentence and cause it to be heard. A pure moral light is by this means kept up in society, composed of men whose thoughts are ever employed in 'accusing or else excusing one another' —so that every individual conscience receives an impulse and a direction from sympathy with the consciences around it. We are aware that the love of applause intervenes at this point as a distinct and auxiliary influence. But the primary influence is a moral one. Each man lives under a consciousness of the vigilant and dis-

cerning witnesses who are on every side of him; and his conscience, kept on the alert and kept in accordance with theirs, acts both more powerfully and more purely, than if left to the decay and the self-deception of its own withering solitude. The lamp which might have waxed dim by itself, revives its fading lustre, by contact and communication with those which burn more brightly in other bosoms than its own; and this law of interchange between mind and mind, forms an important adaptation in the mechanism of human society.

8. But, to revert for a moment to the revival of conscience after that its sensibilities had become torpid for a season; and they are quickened anew, as if by sympathy, with the moral judgments of other men. This phenomenon of conscience seems to afford another glimpse or indication of futurity. It at least tells with what facility that Being, who hath all the resources of infinity at command, could, and that by an operation purely mental, inflict the vengeance of a suffering the most exquisite, on the children of disobedience. He has only to re-open the fountains of memory and conscience; and this will of itself cause distillation within the soul of the waters of bitterness. And if in the voice of earthly remembrancers and earthly judges, we observe such a power of re-awakening—we might infer, not the possibility alone, but the

extreme likelihood of a far more vivid re-awakening, when the offended lawgiver himself takes the judgment into His own hands. If the rebuke of human tongues and human eyes be of such force to revive the sleeping agony within us, what may we not feel, when the adverse sentence is pronounced against us from the throne of God, and in the midst of a universal theatre? If, in this our little day, the condemnation is felt to be insupportable, that twinkles upon us from the thousand secondary and subordinate lustres by which we are surrounded—what must it be, when He, by whose hand they have all been lighted up, turns towards us the strength of His own countenance; and, with His look of reprobation sends forth trouble and dismay over the hosts of the rebellious.*

9. But besides the pleasures and pains of conscience, there is, in the very taste and feeling of moral qualities, a pleasure or a pain. This formed our second general argument in favour of God's righteous administration; and our mental constitution, even when viewed singly, furnishes sufficient materials on

* Dr. Abercromby, in his interesting work on the intellectual powers, states some remarkable cases of resuscitated and enlarged memory, which remind one of the explanation given by Mr. Coleridge of the opening of the books in the day of judgment. It is on the opening of the book of conscience that the sinner is made to feel the truth and righteousness of his condemnation.

which to build it. But the argument is greatly strengthened and enhanced by the adaptation to that constitution of external nature, more especially as exemplified in the reciprocal influences which take place between mind and mind in society: for the effect of this adaptation is to multiply both the pleasures of virtue and the sufferings of vice. The first, the original pleasure, is that which is felt by the virtuous man himself; as, for example, by the benevolent, in the very sense and feeling of that kindness whereby his heart is actuated. The second is felt by him who is the object of this kindness—for merely in the conscious possession of another's good-will, there is a great and distinct enjoyment. And then the manifested kindness of the former awakens gratitude in the bosom of the latter; and this, too, is a highly pleasurable emotion. And lastly, gratitude sends back a delicious incense to the benefactor who awakened it. By the purely mental interchange of these affections, there is generated a prodigious amount of happiness; and that, altogether independent of the gratifications which are yielded by the material gifts of liberality on the one hand, or by the material services of gratitude on the other. Insomuch, that we have only to imagine a reign of perfect virtue; and then, in spite of the physical ills which essentially

and inevitably attach to our condition, we should feel as if we had approximated very nearly to a state of perfect enjoyment among men—or, in other words, that the bliss of paradise would be almost fully realized upon earth, were but the moral graces and charities of paradise firmly established there, and in full operation. Let there be honest and universal good-will in every bosom, and this be responded to from all who are the objects of it by an honest gratitude back again; let kindness, in all its various effects and manifestations, pass and repass from one heart and countenance to another; let there be a universal courteousness in our streets, and let fidelity and affection and all the domestic virtues take up their secure and lasting abode in every family; let the succour and sympathy of a willing neighbourhood be ever in readiness to meet and to overpass all the want and wretchedness to which humanity is liable; let truth, and honour, and inviolable friendship between man and man, banish all treachery and injustice from the world; in the walks of merchandise, let an unfailing integrity on the one side, have the homage done to it of unbounded confidence on the other, insomuch, that each man reposing with conscious safety on the uprightness and attachment of his fellow, and withal rejoicing as much in the prosperity of an acquaintance,

as he should in his own, there would come to be no place for the harassments and the heart-burnings of mutual suspicion or resentment or envy: who does not see, in the state of a society thus constituted and thus harmonized, the palpable evidence of a nature so framed, that the happiness of the world and the righteousness of the world kept pace the one with the other? And it is all important to remark of this happiness, that, in respect both to quality and amount, it mainly consists of moral elements—so that while every giver who feels as he ought, experiences a delight in the exercise of generosity which rewards him a hundred-fold for all its sacrifices; every receiver who feels as he ought, rejoices infinitely more in the sense of the benefactor's kindness, than in the physical gratification or fruit of the benefactor's liberality. It is saying much for the virtuousness of Him who hath so moulded and so organized the spirit of man, that, apart from sense and from all its satisfactions, but from the ethereal play of the good affections alone, the highest felicity of our nature should be generated; that, simply by the interchange of cordiality between man and man, and one benevolent emotion re-echoing to another, there should be yielded to human hearts, so much of the truth and substance of real enjoyment—so that did justice, and

charity, and holiness, descend from heaven to earth, taking full and universal possession of our species, the happiness of heaven would be sure to descend along with them. Could any world be pointed out, where the universality and reign of vice effected the same state of blissful and secure enjoyment that virtue would in ours—we should infer that he was the patron and the friend of vice, who had dominion over it. But when assured, on the experience we have of our actual nature, that in the world we occupy, a perfect morality would, but for certain physical calamities, be the harbinger of a perfect enjoyment—we regard this as an incontestable evidence for the moral goodness of our own actual Deity.

10. And in such an argument as ours, although the main beatitudes of virtue are of a moral and spiritual character, its subserviency to the physical enjoyments of life ought not to be overlooked, though, perhaps, too obvious to be dwelt upon. The most palpable of these subserviencies is the effect of benevolence in diffusing abundance among the needy, and so alleviating the ills of their destitution. This is so very patent as not to require being expatiated on. Yet we might notice here one important adaptation, connected with the exercise of this morality—realized but in part, so long as virtue has only a partial occupation

in society; but destined, we hope, to receive its entire and beautiful accomplishment, when virtue shall have become universal. It is well known that certain collateral but very serious mischiefs attend the exercise of a profuse and capricious and indiscriminate charity; that it may, in fact, augment and aggravate the indigence which it tries to relieve, beside working a moral deterioration among the humbler classes, by ministering to the reckless improvidence of the dissipated and the idle; an operation alike injurious to the physical comfort of the one party, and to the moral comfort of the other. These effects are inevitable, so long as the indiscriminate benevolence of the rich meets with an indefinite selfishness and rapacity on the part of the poor. But this evil will be mitigated and at length done away, with the growth of principle among mankind; and more especially, when, instead of being confined to one of these classes, it is partitioned among both. Let the wealthy be as generous as they ought in their doings, and the poor be as moderate as they ought in their expectations and desires; and then will that problem, which has so baffled the politicians and economists of England, find its own spontaneous, while, at the same time, its best adjustment. Let an exuberant yet well directed liberality on the one side come into encounter, instead of a sordid and insatiable

appetency, with the recoil of delicacy and self-respect upon the other, and the noble independence of men who will work with their own hands rather than be burdensome; and then will the benefactions of the wealthy and the wants of the indigent, not only meet but overpass. The willingness of the one party to give, will exceed the willingness of the other to receive; and an evil which threatens to rend society asunder, and which law in her attempts to remedy has only exasperated, will at length give way before the omnipotence of moral causes. This, as being one of many specimens, tells most significantly that man was made for virtue, or that this was the purpose of God in making him---when we find, that through no other medium than the morality of the people, can the sorest distempers of society be healed. The impotence of human wisdom, and of every political expedient which this wisdom can devise for the well-being of a state, when virtue languishes among the people, is one of the strongest proofs which experience affords, that virtue was the design of our creation. And we know not how more emphatic demonstration can be given of a virtuous Deity, than when we find society to have been so constructed by His hands, that virtue forms the great alternative on which the secure or lasting prosperity of a commonwealth is hinged---so that for any aggregate of human

beings to be right physically and right economically, it is the indispensable, while at the same time the all effectual condition, that they should be right morally.

11. Nothing can be more illustrative of the character of God, or more decisive of the question, whether His preference is for universal virtue or for universal vice in the world, than to consider the effect of each on the well-being of human society—even that society which He did Himself ordain, and whose mechanism is the contrivance of His own intellect, and the work of His own hands. It may not be easy to explain the origin of that moral derangement into which the species has actually fallen; but it affords no obscure or uncertain indication of what the species was principally made for, when we picture to ourselves the difference between a commonwealth of vice and a commonwealth of virtue. We have already said enough on the obvious connection which obtains between the righteousness of a nation and the happiness of its families; and it were superfluous to dilate on the equally obvious connection which obtains between a state of general depravity, and a state of general wretchedness and disorder. And the counterpart observation holds true, that, as the beatitudes of the one condition, so the sufferings of the other are chiefly made up of moral elements. If, in the former, there be a more precious and

heartfelt enjoyment in the possession of another's kindness, than in all the material gifts and services to which that kindness has prompted him---so in the latter, may it often happen, that the agony arising from simple consciousness of another's malignity, will greatly exceed any physical hurt, whether in person or property, that we ever shall sustain from him. A loss that we suffer from the dishonesty of another is far more severely felt, than a ten-fold loss occasioned by accident or misfortune---or, in other words, we find the moral provocation to be greatly more pungent and intolerable than the physical calamity. So that beside the material damage, too palpable to be insisted on at any length, which vice and violence inflict upon society, there should be taken into account the soreness of spirit, the purely mental distress and disquietude which follow in their train---of which we have already seen, how much is engendered even in the workings of one individual mind; but susceptible of being inflamed to a degree indefinitely higher, by the reciprocal working of minds, all of them hating and all hateful to each other. In this mere antipathy of the heart, more especially when aided by nearness and the opportunities of mutual expression, there are sensations of most exquisite bitterness. There is a wretchedness in the mere collision of hostile feelings themselves, though they should break

not forth into overt-acts of hostility; in the simple demonstrations of malignity, apart from its doings; in the war but of words and looks and fierce gesticulations, though no violence should be inflicted on the one side or sustained upon the other. To make the aggressor in these purely mental conflicts intensely miserable, it is enough that he should experience within him the agitations and the fires of a resentful heart. To make the recipient intensely miserable, it is enough that he should be demoniacally glared upon by a resentful eye. Were this power which resides in the emotions by themselves sufficiently reflected on, it would evince how intimately connected, almost how identified, wickedness and wretchedness are with each other. To realize the miseries of a state of war, it is not necessary that there should be contests of personal strength. The mere contests of personal feeling will suffice. Let there be mutual rage and mutual revilings; let there be the pangs and the outcries of fierce exasperation; let there be the continual droppings of peevishness and discontent; let disdain meet with equal disdain; or even, instead of scorn from the lofty, let there be but the slights and the insults of contempt from men, who themselves are of the most contemptible; let there be haughty defiance, and spiteful derision, and the mortifications of affronted and irritated

pride—in the tumults of such a scene, though tumults of the mind alone, there were enough to constitute a hell of assembled maniacs or of assembled malefactors. The very presence and operation of these passions would form their own sorest punishment. To have them perpetually in ourselves is to have a hell in the heart. To meet with them perpetually in others is to be compassed about with a society of fiends, to be beset with the miseries of a Pandemonium.

12. Whether we look then to the separate or the social constitution of humanity, we observe abundant evidence for the mind and meaning of the Deity, who both put together the elements of each individual nature, and the elements which enter into the composition of society. We cannot imagine a more decisive indication of His favour being on the side of moral good, and His displeasure against moral evil, than that, by the working of each of these constitutions, virtue and happiness on the one hand, vice and wretchedness on the other, should be so intimately and inseparably allied. Such sequences or laws of nature as these, speak as distinctly the character of him who established them, as any laws of jurisprudence would the character of the monarch by whom they were enacted. And to learn this lesson, we do not need to wait for the distant consequences of vice or virtue.

We at once feel the distinction put upon them by the hand of the Almighty, in the instant sensations which He hath appended to each of them —implicated as their effects are with the very fountain-head of moral being, and turning the hearts which they respectively occupy, into the seats either of wildest anarchy, or of serene and blissful enjoyment.

13. The law and operation of habit, as exemplified in one individual mind, formed the theme of our third general argument. The only adaptation which we shall notice to this part of our mental constitution in the frame-work of society, is that afforded by the changes which it undergoes in the flux of its successive generations—in virtue of which, the tender susceptibilities of childhood are placed under the influence of that ascendant seniority which precedes or goes before it. At first sight it may be thought of this peculiarity, that it tells equally in both directions—that is, either in the transmission and accumulation of vice, or in the transmission and accumulation of virtue in the world. But there is one circumstance of superiority in favour of the latter, which bids us look hopefully onward to the final prevalence of the good over the evil. We are aware of the virulence wherewith, in families, the crime and profligacy of a depraved parentage must operate on the habits of their offspring; and of the deadly poison

which, in crowded cities, passes with quick descent from the older to the younger, along the links of youthful companionship; and even of those secret, though we trust rare and monstrous societies, which, in various countries and various ages, were held for the celebration of infernal orgies, for the initiation of the yet unknowing or unpractised in the mysteries of vice. But after every deduction has been made for these, who does not see that the systematic and sustained effort, the wide and general enterprize, the combination of numbers in the face of day and with the sympathies of an approving public, give a prodigious balance on the side of moral education? The very selfishness of vice and expansiveness of virtue give rise to this difference between them—the one concentered on its own personal enjoyments, and, with a few casual exceptions, rather heedless of the principles of others than set on any schemes or speculations of proselytism; the other, by its very nature, aspiring after the good of the whole species, and bent on the propagation of its own likeness, till righteousness and truth shall have become universal among men. Accordingly, all the ostensible countenance and exertion, in the cause of learning, whether by governments or associations, is on the side of virtue; while no man could dare to front the public eye, with a scheme of discipleship in the lessons whether of fraud

or profligacy. The clear tendency then is to impress a right direction on the giant power of education; and when this is brought to bear, more systematically and generally than heretofore, on the pliant boyhood of the land—we behold, in the operation of habit, a guarantee for the progressive conquests, and at length the ultimate and universal triumph of good over evil in society. Our confidence in this result is greatly enhanced, when we witness the influence even of but one mind among the hundreds of any given neighbourhood—if zealously and wisely directed to the object of moral and economical improvement. Let that most prolific of all philanthropy then be fully and fairly set on foot, which operates, by means of education, on the early germs of character; and we shall have the most effective of all agency engaged, for the production of the likeliest of all results. The law of habit, when looked to in the manageable ductility of its outset, presents a mighty opening for the production of a new era in the moral history of mankind; and the same law of habit, when looked to in the maturity of its fixed and final establishment, encourages the expectation of a permanent as well as universal reign of virtue in the world.

14. Even in the yet chaotic and rudimental state of the world, we can observe the powers

and the likelihoods of such a consummation; and what gives an overbearing superiority to the chances on the side of virtue is, that parents, although the most sunken in depravity themselves, welcome the proposals, and receive with gratitude, the services of Christian or moral philanthropy in behalf of their families. However hopeless then of reformation among those whose vicious habits have become inveterate, it is well that there should be so wide and unobstructed an access to those, among whom the habits have yet to be formed. It is this which places education on such firm vantage-ground, if not for reclaiming the degeneracy of individuals, yet for reclaiming after the lapse of a few generations the degeneracy of the species; and, however abortive many of the schemes and enterprizes in this highest walk of charity may hitherto have proved, yet the manifest and growing attention to the cause does open a brilliant moral perspective for the ages that are to come. The experience of what has been done locally by a few zealous individuals, warrants our most cheering anticipations of what may yet be done universally—when the powers of that simple but mighty instrument which they employ, if brought to bear on that most malleable of all subjects, the infancy of human existence, come to be better understood, and put

into busy operation over the whole length and breadth of the land. In the grievous defect of our national institutions, and the wretched abandonment of a people left to themselves, and who are permitted to live recklessly and at random as they list—we see enough to account both for the profligacy of our crowded cities, and for the sad demoralization of our neglected provinces. But on the other hand we feel assured, that, in an efficient system of wise and well principled instruction, there are capabilities within our reach for a great and glorious revival. We might not know the reason, why, in the moral world, so many ages of darkness and depravity should have been permitted to pass by—any more than we know the reason, why, in the natural world, the trees of a forest, instead of starting all at once into the full efflorescence and stateliness of their manhood, have to make their slow and laborious advancement to maturity, cradled in storms, and alternately drooping or expanding with the vicissitudes of the seasons. But, though unable to scan all the cycles either of the moral or natural economy, yet may we recognize such influences at work, as when multiplied and developed to the uttermost, are abundantly capable of regenerating the world. One of the likeliest of these influences is the power of education—to the perfecting of which so many minds are earnestly directed at this moment;

and for the general acceptance of which in society, we have a guarantee, in the strongest affections and fondest wishes of the fathers and mothers of families.

Chapter V.

On the special and subordinate Adaptations of external Nature to the moral Constitution of Man.

1. We have hitherto confined our attention to certain great and simple phenomena of our moral nature, which, though affording a different sort of evidence for the being of God from the organic and complicated structures of the material world—yet, on the hypothesis of an existent Deity, are abundantly decisive of His preference for virtue over vice, and so of the righteousness of His own character. That he should have inserted a great master faculty in every human bosom, all whose decisions are on the side of justice, benevolence, and truth, and condemnatory of their opposites; that He should have inserted this conscience with such powers of instant retribution, in the triumphs of that complacency wherewith he so promptly rewards the good, and the horrors of that remorse wherewith

He as promptly chastises the evil; that beside these, He should have so distinguished between virtue and vice,* as that the emotions and exercises of the former should all be pleasureable, and of the latter painful to the taste of the inner man; that He should have so ordained the human constitution, as that by the law of habit, virtuous and vicious lives, or series of acts having these respective moral qualities, should issue in the fixed and permanent results of virtuous and vicious characters—these form the important generalities of our moral nature: And while they obviously and immediately announce to us a present demonstration in favour of virtue; they seem to indicate a preparation and progress

* Butler, in Part I, Chapter 3d of his Analogy, makes the following admirable discrimination between actions themselves and that quality ascribed to them which we call virtuous or vicious. —"An action by which any natural passion is gratified, or fortune acquired, procures delight or advantage, abstracted from all consideration of the morality of such action, consequently the pleasure or advantage in this case is gained by the action itself, not by the morality, the virtuousness, or viciousness of it, though it be, perhaps, virtuous or vicious. Thus to say, such an action or course of behaviour, procured such pleasure or advantage, or brought on such inconvenience and pain, is quite a different thing from saying that such good or bad effect was owing to the virtue or vice of such action or behaviour. In one case, an action abstracted from all moral consideration, produced its effect. In the other case, for it will appear that there are such cases, the morality of the action, the action under a moral consideration, *i. e.* the virtuousness or viciousness of it, produced the effect.

towards a state of things, when, after that the moral education of the present life has been consummated, the great Ruler of men will manifest the eternal distinction which he puts between the good and the evil.

2. Now in these few simple sequences, however strongly and unequivocally they evince the character of a God already proved or already presupposed, we have not the same intense evidence for design, which is afforded by the distinct parts or the distinct principles of a very multifarious combination. Yet the constitution of man's moral nature is not defective in this evidence—though certainly neither so prolific nor so palpable in our mental, as in our anatomical system. Still, however, there is a mechanism in mind as well as body, with a diversity of principles, if not a diversity of parts, consisting of so many laws, grafted it may be on a simple and indivisible substance, yet yielding in the fact of their beneficial concurrence, no inconsiderable argument for the wisdom and goodness of Him who framed us. Nor does it matter, as we have already said, whether these are all of them original, or some of them, as the analysts of mind have laboured to manifest, only derivative laws in the human constitution. If the former, we have an evidence grounded on the beneficial conjunction of a greater number of independent laws. If the latter, we are

reduced to fewer independent laws—but these all the more prolific of useful applications, each of which applications is grounded on a beneficial adaptation of some peculiar circumstances, in the operation of which it is, that the primary is transmuted into a secondary law.* But whether the one or the other, they exhibit phases of humanity distinct from any that we have yet been employed in contemplating; a number of special affections, each characterized by its own name, and pointing to its own separate object, yet all of them performing an important subsidiary part, for the moral good both of the individual and of the species; and presenting us, therefore, with the materials of additional evidence for a moral and beneficent design in the formation of our race.

3. When we look to the beauty which overspreads the face of nature, and the exquisite gratification which it ministers to the senses of man—we cannot doubt, either the taste for beauty which resides in the primeval mind that emanated all this gracefulness; or the benevolence that endowed man with a kindred taste,

* And besides this, would it not bespeak a more comprehensive wisdom on the part of a human artificer, that by means of one device, or by the application of one principle, he effected not a few, but many distinct and beneficial purposes; and does it not in like manner enhance the exhibition of divine skill in the workmanship of nature, when a single law is found to subserve a vast and manifold variety of important uses?

and so fitted him for a kindred enjoyment. This conclusion, however, like any moral conclusion we have yet come to, respecting the perfections or the purposes of God, is founded on generalities,—on the general amount of beauty in the world, and the delight wherewith men behold and admire it. Yet, beside this, we may draw a corroborative evidence for the same, from the machinery of certain special contrivances—as the construction of the calyx in plants, for the defence of the tender blossom previous to its expansion; and the apparatus for scattering seeds, whereby the earth is more fully invested with its mantle of rich and varied garniture. And notwithstanding the blight which has so obviously passed over the moral world, and defaced many of its original lineaments, while it has left the materialism of creation, the loveliness of its scenes and landscapes, in a great measure untouched—still we possess very much the same materials for a Natural Theology, in reasoning on the element of virtue, as in reasoning on the element of beauty. We have first those generalities of argument which are already expounded by us at sufficient length; and we have also the evidence, now to be unfolded, of certain special provisions for the preservation and growth of the immortal plant, in the study of which, we shall observe more of mechanism than we have yet contemplated; and more,

therefore, of that peculiar argument for design, which lies in the adaptation of varied means, in the concurrence of distinct expedients, each helping the other onward to a certain beneficial consummation.

4. But we must here premise an observation extensively applicable in mental science. When recognising the obvious subserviency of some given feeling or principle in the mind to a beneficial result—we are apt to imagine that it was somehow or other, in the contemplation of this result, that the principle was generated; and that therefore, instead of a distinct and original part of the human constitution, it is but a derivative from an anterior process of thought or calculation on the part of man, in the act of reflecting on what was most for the good of himself, or the good of society. In this way man is conceived to be in some measure the creator of his own mental constitution; or, at least, there are certain parts of it regarded as secondary, and the formation of which is ascribed to the wisdom of man, which, if regarded as instinctive and primary, would have been directly ascribed to the wisdom of God. There are many writers, for example, on the origin and rights of property, who, instead of admitting what may be termed an instinct of appropriation, would hold the appropriating tendency to be the result of human intelligence, after ex-

perience had of the convenience and benefits of such an arrangement. Now on this subject, we may take a lesson from the physical constitution of man. It is indispensable to the preservation of our animal system, that food should be received at certain intervals into the stomach. Yet, notwithstanding all the strength which is ascribed to the principle of self-preservation, and all the veneration which is professed by the expounders of our nature for the wisdom and foresight of man—the author of our frame has not left this important interest merely to our care, or our consideration. He has not so trusted us to ourselves; but has inserted among the other affections and principles wherewith He has endowed us, the appetite of hunger—a strong and urgent and ever-recurring desire for food, which, it is most certain, stands wholly unconnected with any thought on our part, of its physical or posterior uses for the sustenance of the body; and from which it would appear, that we need to be not only reminded at proper intervals of this incumbent duty, but goaded on to it. Could the analysts of our nature have ascertained of hunger, that it was the product of man's reflection on the necessity of food, it might have been quoted as an instance of the care which man takes of himself. But it seems that he could not be thus confided, either with his own individual preservation, or with the

preservation of his species; and so, for the security of both these objects, strong appetites had to be given him, which, incapable of being resolved into any higher principles, stand distinctly and unequivocally forth, as instances of the care that is taken of him by God.

5. Now this, though it does not prove, yet may prepare us to expect similar provisions in the constitution of our minds. Indeed the operose and complicated system, which the great Architect of nature hath devised for our bodies, carries in it a sort of warning to those, who, enamoured of the simplifications of theory, would labour to reduce all our mental phenomena to one or two principles. There is no warrant for this in the examples which Anatomy and Physiology, those sciences that have to do with the animal economy of man, have placed before our eyes. Now, though we admit not this as evidence for the actual complexity of man's moral economy—it may at least school away those prepossessions of the fancy or of the taste, that would lead us to resist or to dislike such evidence when offered. We hold it not unlikely that the same Being, who, to supplement the defects of human prudence, hath furnished us with distinct corporeal appetites, that might prompt us to operations, of the greatest subservient benefit both to the individual and the species—might also, to sup-

plement the defects of human wisdom and principle, have furnished us with distinct mental affections or desires, both for our own particular good and the good of society. If man could not be left to his own guidance, in matters which needed but the anticipation of a few hours; but to save him from the decay and the death which must have otherwise ensued, had so powerful a remembrancer and instigator given to him as the appetite of hunger—we ought not to marvel, should it be found that nature, in endowing him mentally, hath presumed on his incapacity, either for wisely devising or for regularly acting, with a view to distant consequences, and amid the complicated relations of human society. It may, on the one hand, have inserted forces, when the mere consideration of good effects would not have impelled; or, on the other hand, may have inserted checks, when the mere consideration of evil effects would not have arrested. Yet so it is, that, because of the good that is thereby secured and of the evil that is thereby shunned—we are apt to imagine of some of the most useful principles of our nature, that they are, somehow, the product of human manufacture; the results of human intelligence, or of rapid processes of thought by man, sitting in judgment on the consequences of his actions, and wisely provid-

ing either for or against them. Now it is very true, that the anger, and the shame, and the emulation, and the parental affection, and the compassion, and the love of reputation, and the sense of property, and the conscience or moral sense—are so many forces of a mechanism, which if not thus furnished, and that too within certain proportions, would run into a disorder that might have proved destructive both of the individual and of the species. For reasons already hinted at, we hold it immaterial to the cause of natural theism, whether these constitutional propensities of the human mind are its original or its secondary laws; but, at all events, it is enough, for any argument of ours, that they are not so generated by the wisdom of man, as to supersede the inference which we draw from them, in favour both of the wisdom and goodness of God.

6. The common definition given of anger, is an instance of the tendency on the part of philosophers, if not to derive, at least to connect the emotions of which we have been made susceptible with certain anterior or higher principles of our nature. Dr. Reid tells us that the proper object of resentment is an injury; and that as "no man can have the notion of injustice, without having the notion of justice," then, "if resentment be natural to man, the notion of

justice must be no less natural."* And Dr. Brown defines anger to be "that emotion of instant displeasure, which arises from the feeling of injury done or the discovery of injury intended, or, in many cases, from the discovery of the mere omission of good offices to which we conceived ourselves entitled, though this very omission may, of itself, be regarded as a species of injury." Now the sense of injury implies a sense of its opposite—a sense of justice, therefore, or the conception of a moral standard from which the injury that has awakened the resentment, is felt to be a deviation. But as nothing ought to form part of a definition, which is not indispensable to the thing defined, it would appear, as if, in the judgment of both these philosophers, all who were capable of anger must also have, to a certain degree, a capacity of moral judgment or moral feeling. The property of resenting a hurt inflicted upon ourselves,

* In glaring contradiction to this, is Dr. Reid's own affirmation regarding the brutes. He says, "that conscience is peculiar to man, we see no vestige of it in the brute animals. It is one of those prerogatives by which we are raised above them." But animals are most abundantly capable of anger—even of that which, by a very general definition, is said to be the emotion that is awakened by a sense of injury, which sense of injury must imply in it the sense of its opposite, even of justice, and so land us in the conclusion that brutes are capable of moral conception, or that they have a conscience.

would, at this rate, argue, in all cases, a perception of what the moral and equitable adjustment would be between ourselves and others. Now, that these workings of a moral nature are essential to the feeling of anger, is an idea which admits of most obvious and decisive refutation—it being an emotion to which not only infants are competent, anterior to the first dawnings of their moral nature; but even idiots, with whom this nature is obliterated, or still more the inferior animals who want it altogether. There must be a sense of annoyance to originate the feeling; but a sense of injury, implying, as it does, a power of moral judgment or sensibility, can be in no way indispensable to an emotion, exemplified in its utmost force and intensity by sentient creatures, in whom there cannot be detected even the first rudiments of a moral nature. Two dogs, when fighting for a bone, make as distinct and declared an exhibition of their anger, as two human beings when disputing about the boundary of their contiguous fields. The emotion flashes as unequivocally from any of the inferior, as it does from the only rational and moral species on the face of our globe; as in the vindictive glare of an infuriated bull, or of a lioness robbed of her whelps, and who as if making proclamation of her wrongs, gives forth her deep and reiterated cry to the echoes of the wilderness. It

is an emotion, in fact, which seems coextensive, not only with moral, but with physical sensation. And, if any faith can be placed in the physiognomy, or the natural signs, by which irrational creatures represent what passes within them; this passion announces itself as vividly and discernibly in the outcries of mutual resentment which ring throughout the amplitudes of savage and solitary nature, as in the contests of civilized man.

7. The truth, then, seems to be, that the office of the moral faculty is, not to originate, but rather to confine and qualify and regulate this emotion. Anger, if we but study its history and actual exhibitions, will be found the primary and the natural response to a hurt or harm or annoyance of any sort inflicted on us by others; and, as such, may be quite expansive and unrestrained and open to excitation from all points of the compass—anterior to and apart from any consideration of its justice, or whether in the being who called it forth, there have been the purpose or not of violating our rights. Infants are fully capable of the feeling, long before they have a notion of equity, or of what is rightfully their own and rightfully another's. The anger of animals, too, is, in like manner, destitute of that moral ingredient, which the definitions we have quoted suppose indispensable to the formation of it. And yet

their emitted sounds have the very expression of fierceness, that we meet with so often among the fellows of our own species. The provocation, the resentment, the kindling glance of hostility, the gradual heightening of the wrath, its discharge in acts of mutual violence, and lastly, its glutted satisfaction in the flight and even the death of the adversary—these are all indicative of kindred workings within, that have their outward vent in a common and kindred physiognomy, between him who is styled the lord of the creation, and those beneath his feet, who are conceived to stand at a distance that scarcely admits of comparison in the phenomena of their nature. Even man, in the full growth of his rational and moral nature, will often experience the outbreakings of an anger merely physical; as, to state one instance out of the many, may be witnessed in the anger wreaked by him on the inferior animals, when, all unconscious of injury to him, they enter upon his fields, or damage the fruit of his labours. The object of a just resentment towards others, is the purposed injustice of others towards us; and, so far from purposing the injustice, animals have not even the faculty of conceiving it. The moral consideration, then, does not enter as a constituent part into all resentment. It is rather a superadded quality which designates a species of it. It

is not the epithet which characterizes all anger, but is limited to a certain kind of it. It may be as proper to say of one anger that it is just, and of another that justice or morality has had nothing to do with it—as it is to say of one blow by the hand that it has been rightfully awarded, and of another blow that such a moral characteristic is wholly inapplicable. Morality may at times characterize both the mental feeling, and the muscular performance; but it should be as little identified with the one as with the other. And however much analysts may have succeeded on other occasions, in reducing to sameness what appeared to be separate constituents of our nature, certain it is, that anger cannot thus be regarded as a resulting manufacture from any of its higher principles. It forms a distinct and original part of our constitution, of which morality, whenever it exists and has the predominance, might take the direction, without being at all essential to the presence or operation of it. So far from this, it is nowhere exhibited in greater vivacity and distinctness than by those creatures who possess but an animal, without so much as the germ, or the rudest elements of a moral nature.

8. Anger then is an emotion that may rage and tumultuate in a bosom into which one moral conception has never entered. For its excite-

ment nothing more seems necessary than to thwart any desire however unreasonable, or to disappoint any one object which the heart may chance to be set upon. So far from a sense of justice being needful to originate this emotion—it is the man who, utterly devoid of justice, would monopolize to himself all that lies within the visible horizon, who is most exposed to its visitation. He is the most vulnerable to wrath from every point of the vast circumference around him—who, conceiving the Universe to be made for himself alone, is most insensible to the rights and interests of other men. It is in fact because he is so unfurnished with the ideas of justice, that he is so unbridled in resentment. Justice views the world and all its interests as already partitioned among the various members of the human population, each occupying his own little domain; and, instead of permitting anger to expatiate at random over the universal face of things, justice would curb and over-rule its ebullitions in the bosom of every individual, till a trespass was made within the limits of that territory which is properly and peculiarly his own. In other words, it is the office of this virtue, not to inspire anger, but to draw land-marks and limitations around it; and, so far from a high moral principle originating this propensity, it is but an animal propensity,

restrained and kept within check and confinement at the bidding of principle.

9. The distinction between reflective and unreflective anger did not escape the notice of the sagacious Butler, as may be seen in the following passages of a sermon upon resentment.—"Resentment is of two kinds—hasty and sudden, or settled and deliberate. The former is called anger and often passion, which, though a general word, is frequently appropriated and confined to the particular feeling, sudden anger, as distinct from deliberate resentment malice and revenge." "Sudden anger upon certain occasions is mere instinct, as merely so, as the disposition to close our eyes upon the apprehension of something falling into them, and no more necessarily implies any degree of reason. I say necessarily, for, to be sure, hasty as well as deliberate anger, may be occasioned by injury or contempt, in which cases reason suggests to our thoughts the injury and contempt which is the occasion of the emotion: But I am speaking of the former, only in so far as it is to be distinguished from the latter. The only way in which our reason and understanding can raise anger, is by representing to our mind an injustice or injury of some kind or other. Now momentary anger is frequently raised, not only without any rule, but without any reason; that is, without any appearance

of injury as distinct from hurt or pain. It cannot, I suppose, be thought that this passion in infants and the lower species of animals, and which is often seen in man towards them, it cannot, I say, be imagined that these instances of this emotion are the effect of reason: no, they are occasioned by mere sensation and feeling. It is opposition, sudden hurt, violence which naturally excites this passion; and the real demerit or fault of him who offers that violence, or is the cause of that opposition or hurt, does not in many cases so much as come into thought." "The reason and end for which man was made thus liable to this emotion, is that he might be better qualified to prevent, and likewise or perhaps chiefly to resist and defeat sudden force, violence, and opposition, considered merely as such, and without regard to the fault or demerit of him who is the author of them; yet since violence may be considered in this other and further view, as implying fault, and since injury as distinct from harm may raise sudden anger, sudden anger may likewise accidentally serve to prevent or remedy such fault and injury. But considered as distinct from settled anger, it stands in our nature for self-defence, and not for the administration of justice. There are plainly cases, and in the uncultivated parts of the world, and where regular governments are not formed they frequently

happen, in which there is no time for considering, and yet to be passive is certain destruction, in which sudden resistance is the only security."—It is an exceeding good instance that Bishop Butler gives of the distinction between instinctive and what may be called rational anger, when he specifies the anger that we often feel towards the inferior animals. There is properly no injury done, where there is no injury intended. And he who is incapable of conceiving what an injury is, is not a rightful object for at least any moral resentment. But that there is what may be called a physical as well as a moral resentment, is quite palpable from the positive wrath which is felt when any thing untoward or hurtful is done to us even by the irrational creatures. The men who use them as instruments of service often discharge the most outrageous wrath upon them—acting the part of ferocious tyrants towards these wretched victims of their cruelty. When a combat takes place between man and one of the inferior animals, there is a resentment felt by the former just as keen and persevering, as if it were between two human combatants. This makes it quite obvious that there may be anger without any sense of designed injury on the part of him who is the object of it. Even children, idiots, lunatics, might all be the objects of such a resentment.

10. The final cause of this emotion in the inferior animals is abundantly obvious. It stimulates and ensures resistance to that violence, which, if not resisted, would often terminate in the destruction of its object. And it probably much oftener serves the purpose of prevention than of defence. The first demonstration of a violence to be offered on the one hand, when met by the preparation and the counter-menace of an incipient resentment on the other, not only repels the aggression after it has begun, but still more frequently, we believe, through the reaction and restraint of fear on the otherwise attacking party, prevents the aggression from being made. The stout and formidable antagonists eye each other with a sort of natural respect; and, as if by a common though tacit consent, wisely abstain on either side from molestation, and pass onward without a quarrel. It is thus that many a fierce contest is forborne, which, but for the operation of anger on the one side and fear upon the other, would most certainly have been entered upon. And so by a system, or machinery of reciprocal checks and counteractives, and where the mental affections too perform the part of essential forces, there is not that incessant warfare of extermination which might have depopulated the world. And here we might observe, that, in studying that balance of powers and of preserving influences, which

obtains even in a commonwealth of brutes, the uses of a mental are just as palpable as those of a material collocation. The anger which prompts to the resistance of aggression is as obviously inserted by the hand of a contriver, as are the horns or the bristles or any other defensive weapons wherewith the body of the animal is furnished. The fear which wings the flight of a pursued animal is as obviously intended for its safety, as is its muscular conformation or capacity for speed. The affection of a mother for her young points as intelligibly to a designer's care for the preservation of the species, as does that apparatus of nourishment wherewith nature hath endowed her. The mother's fondness supplies as distinct and powerful an argument as the mother's milk—or, in other words, a mental constitution might, as well as a physical constitution, be pregnant with the indications of a God.

11. But to return to the special affection of anger, with a reference more particularly to its workings in our own species, where we have the advantage of nearer and distincter observation. We must be abundantly sensible of the pain which there is, not merely in the feeling of resentment, when it burns and festers within our own hearts, but also in being the objects of another's resentment. They are not the effects only of his anger that we are afraid of; we are

afraid of the anger itself, of but the looks and the words of angry violence, though we should be perfectly secure from all the deeds of violence. The simple displeasure of another is formidable, though no chastisement whatever shall follow upon it. We are so constituted, that we tremble before the frown of an offended countenance, and perhaps as readily as we would under the menace of an uplifted arm; and would often make as great a sacrifice to shun the moral discomfort of another's wrath, as to shun the physical infliction which his wrath might impel him to lay upon us. It is thus that where there is no strength for any physical infliction, still there may be a power of correction that amply makes up for it, in the rebuke of an indignant eye or an indignant voice. This goes far to repair the inequalities of muscular force among men; and forms indeed a most important mound of defence against the effervescence and the outbreakings of brute violence in society. It is incalculable how much we owe to this influence for the peace and courteousness that obtain in every neighbourhood. The more patent view of anger is, that it is an instrument of defence against the aggressions of violence or injustice; and by which they are kept in check, from desolating, as they otherwise would, the face of society. But it not only operates as a corrective against the outrages that

are actually made. It has a preventive operation also; and we are wholly unable to say, in how far the dread of its forth-breaking, serves to soften and to subdue human intercourse into those many thousand decencies of mutual forbearance and complaisance, by which it is gladdened and adorned. There is a recoil from anger in the heart of every man when directed against himself; and many who would disdain to make one sacrifice by which to appease it, after it had thrown down the gauntlet of hostility, will in fact make one continued sacrifice of their tone and manner and habit, that it may not be awakened out of its slumbers. It were difficult to compute how much we are indebted, for the blandness and the amenity of human companionships, to the consciousness of so many sleeping fires, in readiness to blaze forth, at the touch or on the moment of any provocation being offered. We doubt not, that, in military and fashionable, and indeed in all society, it acts as a powerful restraint on every thing that is offensive. The domineering insolence of those who, with the instrument of anger too, would hold society in bondage, is most effectually arrested, when met by an anger which throws back the fear upon themselves, and so quiets and composes all their violence. It is thus that a balance is maintained, without which human society might go into utter derangement; and

without which too, even the animal creation might lose its stability and disappear. And there is a kind of moral power in the anger itself, that is separate from the animal or the physical strength which it puts into operation; and which invests with command, or at least provides with defensive armour those who would otherwise be the most helpless of our species—so that decrepid age or feeble womanhood has by the mere rebuke of an angry countenance made the stoutest heart to tremble before them. It is a moral force, by which the inequalities of muscular force are repaired; and, while itself a firebrand and a destroyer, yet, by the very terror of its ravages, which it diffuses among all, were it to stalk abroad and at large over the world—does it contribute to uphold the pacific virtues among men.

12. When the anger of one individual in a household is the terror of the rest, then that individual may become the little despot of the establishment; and thus it is that often the feeblest of them all in muscular strength may wield a domestic tyranny by which the stoutest is overpowered. But when the anger of this one is fortunately met by the spirit and resolution of another, then, kept at bay with its own weapon, it is neutralized into a state of innocence. It is not necessary for the production of this effect, that the parties ever should have come to the extre-

mity of an open and declared violence. If there be only a mutual consciousness of each other's energy of passion and of purpose, then a mutual awe and mutual forbearance may be the result of it. And thus it is, that, by the operation of these reciprocal checks in a family, the peace and order of it may be securely upholden. We have witnessed how much a wayward and outrageous temper has been sweetened, by the very presence in the same mansion, of one who could speak again, and would not succumb to any unreasonable violence. The violence is abated. And we cannot compute how much it is that the blandness and the mutual complaisance which obtain in society, are due to the secret dread in which men stand of each other's irritation; or, in other words, little do we know to what extent, the smile and the courteousness and the urbanity of civilized life, that are in semblance so many expressions of human benevolence, may, really and substantially, be owing to the fears of human selfishness. Were this speculation pursued, it might lead to a very humiliating estimate indeed of the virtue of individuals—though we cannot but admire the wisdom of that economy, by which, even without virtue, individuals may be made, through the mutual action and reaction of their emotions, to form the materials of a society that can stand. Anger does in private life, what the terrors of the penal code do in the

community at large. It acts with salutary influence, in a vast multiplicity of cases, which no law could possibly provide for; and where the chastisements of law, whether in their corrective or preventive influence, cannot reach. The good of a penal discipline in society extends far and wide beyond the degree in which it is actually inflicted; and many are the pacific habits of a neighbourhood, that might be ascribed, not to the pacific virtues of the men who compose it, but to the terror of those consequences which all men know would ensue upon their violation. And it is just so of anger, in the more frequent and retired intercourse of private life. The good which it does by the fear of its ebullitions is greater far than all which is done by the actual ebullitions themselves. But we cannot fail to perceive that the amount of service which is done *in this way* to the species at large, must all be regarded as a deduction from the amount of credit which is due to the individuals who belong to it. We have already remarked on the propensity of moralists to accredit the wisdom of man with effects, which, as being provided for not by any care or reflection of ours, but by the operation of constitutional instincts—are more properly and immediately to be ascribed to the wisdom of God. And in like manner, there is a propensity in moralists to accredit the wisdom of man with effects, which, as being

provided for not by any consciousness or exercise of principle on our part, but by the operation still of constitutional instincts---are more properly and immediately to be ascribed to the goodness of God.*

13. There is another special affection which we feel more particularly induced to notice, from its palpable effect in restraining the excess of one of nature's strongest appetites. Its position in the mental system reminds one of the very obvious adaptation to each other of the antagonist muscles in anatomy. We allude to the operation of shame between the sexes, considered as a check or counteractive to the indulgence of passion between the sexes. The former is as clear an instance of moral, as the latter is of physical adaptation. And in their

* The following extract from Brown tends well to illustrate one of the final causes for the implantation of this principle in our constitution.—"What human wants required, that all-foreseeing Power, who is the guardian of our infirmities, has supplied to human weakness. There is a principle in our mind, which is to us like a constant protector, which may slumber, indeed, but which slumbers only at seasons when its vigilance would be useless, which awakes therefore, at the first appearance of unjust intention, and which becomes more watchful and more vigorous, in proportion to the violence of the attack which it has to dread. What should we think of the providence of nature, if, when aggression was threatened against the weak and unarmed, at a distance from the aid of others, there were instantly and uniformly, by the intervention of some wonder-working power, to rush into the hand of the defenceless a sword or other weapon of defence? And yet this would be but a feeble assistance, if com-

adjustment the one to the other, we observe that sort of exquisite balancing, which, perhaps more than any thing else, indicates the wisdom and the hand of a master—as if when, in the execution of some very nice and difficult task, he is managing between contrary extremes, or is devising in just proportion for contrary interests. We might better comprehend the design of this strikingly peculiar mechanism, by imagining of the two opposite instincts, that either of them was in excess, or either of them in defect. Did the constitutional modesty prevail to a certain conceivable extent—it might depopulate the world. Did the animal propensity preponderate, on the other hand—it might land the world in an anarchy of unblushing and universal licen-

pared with that which we receive from the simple emotions which Heaven has caused to rush, as it were, into our mind for repelling every attack. What would be a sword in the trembling hand of the infirm, of the aged, of him whose pusillanimous spirit shrinks at the very appearance, not of danger merely, but even of the arms by the use of which danger might be averted, and to whom consequently, the very sword, which he scarcely knew how to grasp, would be an additional cause of terror, not an instrument of defence and safety? The instant anger which arises does more than many such weapons. It gives the spirit, which knows how to make a weapon of every thing, or, which of itself does, without a weapon, what even a thunder-bolt would be powerless to do, in the shuddering grasp of the coward. When anger arises, fear is gone; there is no coward, for all are brave. Even bodily infirmity seems to yield to it, like the very infirmities of the mind. The old are, for the moment, young again; the weakest, vigorous." Lect. lxiii.

tiousness—to the entire breaking up of our present blissful economy, by which society is partitioned into separate families; and, with the interests of domestic life to provide for, and its affections continually to recreate the heart in the midst of anxieties and labours, mankind are kept in a state both of most useful activity and of greatest enjoyment. We cannot conceive a more skilful, we had almost said a more delicate or dexterous adjustment, than the one actually fixed upon—by which, in the first instance, through an appetency sufficiently strong the species is upholden; and, in the second instance, through the same appetency sufficiently restrained, those hallowed decencies of life are kept unviolate, which are so indispensable to all order and to all moral gracefulness among men. We have only to conceive the frightful aspect which society would put on, did unbridled licentiousness stalk at large as a destroyer, and rifle every home of those virtues which at once guard and adorn it. The actual and the beautiful result, when viewed in connection with that moral force, by the insertion of which in our nature it is accomplished, strongly bespeaks a presiding intellect—which in framing the mechanism of the human mind, had respect to what was most beneficent and best for the mechanism of human society.

14. It is well that man is so much the crea-

ture of a constitution which is anterior to his own wisdom and his own will, and of circumstances which are also anterior to his wisdom and his will. It would have needed a far more comprehensive view than we are equal to, both of what was best for men in a community and for man as an individual, to have left a creature so short-sighted or of such brief and narrow survey, with the fixing either of his own principles of action or of his relation with the external world. That constitutional shame, that quick and trembling delicacy, a prompt and ever-present guardian, appearing as it does in very early childhood, is most assuredly not a result from any anticipation by us, either of future or distant consequences. Even the moral sense within us, does not speak so loudly or so distinctly the evil of this transgression, as it does of falsehood, or of injurious freedom with the property of a neighbour, or of personal violence. Other forces than those of human prudence or human principle seem to have been necessary, for resisting a most powerful and destructive fascination, which never is indulged, without deterioration to the whole structure of the moral character and constitution; and which, when once permitted to lord it over the habits, so often terminates in the cruel disruption of families, and the irretrievable ruin and disgrace of the offender. It is

not by any prospective calculation of ours, that this natural modesty, acting as a strong precautionary check against evils which however tremendous, we are too heedless to reflect upon, has been established within us. It is directly implanted by one, who sees the end from the beginning; and so forms altogether a most palpable instance, in which we have reason to congratulate ourselves, that the well-being of man, instead of being abandoned to himself, has been placed so immediately under the management of better and higher hands.

15. There are many other special affections in our nature—the principal of which will fall to be noticed in succeeding chapters; and the interests to which they are respectively subservient form a natural ground of division, in our treatment of them. Certain of these affections stand related to the civil, and certain of them to the economic well-being of society; and each of these subserviencies will form the subject of a separate argument.

Chapter VI.

On those special Affections which conduce to the civil and political Well-being of Society.

1. The first step towards the aggregation of men into a community, or the first departure from a state of perfect isolation, could that state ever have subsisted for a single day, is the patriarchal arrangement. No sooner indeed is the infant creature ushered into being, than it is met by the cares and the caresses of those who are around it, and who have either attended or welcomed its entry on this scene of existence—as if, in very proportion to the extremity of its utter helplessness, was the strength of that security which nature hath provided, in the workings of the human constitution, for the protection of its weakness and the supply of all its little wants. That there should be hands to receive and to manage this tender visitant, is not more obviously a benevolent adaptation, than that there should be hearts to sympathise with its cries of impotency or distress. The maternal affection is as express an instance of this as the maternal nourishment —nor is the inference at all weakened, by the attempts, even though they should be successful, of those who would demonstrate of this universal

fondness of mothers, that, instead of an original instinct, it is but a derived or secondary law of our nature. Were that analysis as distinct and satisfactory as it is doubtful and obscure, which would resolve all mental phenomena into the single principle of association—still the argument would stand. A secondary law, if not the evidence of a distinct principle, requires at least distinct and peculiar circumstances for its developement; and the right ordering of these for a beneficial result, is just as decisively the proof and the characteristic of a plan, as are the collocations of Anatomy. It might not have been necessary to endow matter with any new property for the preparation of a child's aliment in the breast of its mother—yet the frame-work of that very peculiar apparatus by which the milk is secreted, and the suckling's mouth provided with a duct of conveyance for the abstraction of it, is, in the many fitnesses of time and place and complicated arrangement, pregnant with the evidence of a designer's contrivance and a designer's care. And in like manner, though it should be established, that the affection of a mother for her young from the moment of their birth, instead of an independent principle in her nature, was the dependent product of remembrances and feelings which had accumulated during the period of gestation, and were at length fixed, amidst the

agonies of parturition, into the strongest of all her earthly regards—the argument for design is just as entire, though, instead of connecting it with the peculiarity of an original law, we connect it with the peculiarity of those circumstances which favour the developement of this maternal feeling, in the form of a secondary law. There is an infinity of conceivable methods, by which the successive generations of men might have risen into being; and our argument is entire, if, out of these, that method has been selected, whereof the result is an intense affection on the part of mothers for their offspring. It matters not whether this universal propensity of theirs be a primary instinct of nature, or but a resulting habit which can be traced to the process which they have been actually made to undergo, or the circumstances in which they have actually been placed. The ordination of this process, the mandate for the assemblage and collocation of these circumstances, gives as distinct and decisive indication of an ordaining mind, as would the establishment of any peculiar law. Let it suffice once for all to have said this—for if in the prosecution of our inquiry, we stopped at every turn to entertain the question, whether each beneficial tendency on which we reasoned, were an original or only a secondary principle in nature —we should be constantly rushing uncalled

into the mists of obscurity; and fastening upon our cause an element of doubt and weakness, which in no wise belongs to it.

2. The other affections which enter into the composition, or rather, form the cement of a family, are more obviously of a derivative, and less obviously of an instinctive character, than is that strong maternal affinity which meets so opportunely with the extreme helplessness of its objects, that but for the succour and sympathy of those whose delight it is to cherish and sustain them, would perish in the infancy of their being. However questionable the analysis might be, which would resolve the universal fondness of mothers for their young into something anterior—the paternal and brotherly and filial affections seem, on surer grounds, and which are accessible to observation, not to be original but originated feelings. Inquirers, according to their respective tastes and tendencies, have deviated on both sides of the evidence—that is, either to an excessive and hypothetic simplification of nature, or to an undue multiplication of her first principles. And certain it is, that when told of the mystic ties which bind together into a domestic community, as if by a sort of certain peculiar attraction, all of the same kindred and the same blood—we are reminded of those occult qualities, which, in the physics

both of matter and of mind, afforded so much of entertainment, to the scholastics of a former age. But with the adjustment of this philosophy we properly have no concern. It matters not to our argument whether the result in question be due to the force of instincts or to the force of circumstances,—any more than whether, in the physical system, a certain beneficial result may be ascribed to apt and peculiar laws, or to apt and peculiar collocations. In virtue of one or other or both of these causes, we behold the individuals of the species grouped together—or, as it may be otherwise expressed, the aggregate mass of the species, broken asunder into distinct families, and generally living by themselves, each family under one common roof, but apart from all the rest in distinct habitations; while the members of every little commonwealth are so linked by certain affections, or by certain feelings of reciprocal obligation, that each member feels almost as intensely for the wants and sufferings of the rest as he would for his own, or labours as strenuously for the sustenance of all as he would for his own individual sustenance. There is very generally a union of hearts, and still oftener a union of hands, for the common interest and provision of the household.

3. The benefits of such an arrangement are too obvious to be enumerated. Even though the

law of self-preservation had sufficed in those cases where the individual has adequate wisdom to devise, and adequate strength to provide for his own maintenance—of itself, it could not have availed, when this strength and this wisdom are wanting. It is in the bosom of families, and under the touch and impulse of family affections, that helpless infancy is nurtured into manhood, and helpless disease or age have the kindliest and most effective succour afforded to them. Even when the strength for labour, instead of being confined to one, is shared among several of the household, there is often an incalculable benefit, in the very concert of their forces and community of their gains—so long, for example, as a brotherhood, yet advancing towards maturity, continue to live under the same roof, and to live under the direction of one authority, or by the movement of one will. We shall not expatiate, either on the enjoyment that might be had under such an economy, while it lasts, in the sweets of mutual affection; or minutely explain how, after the economy is dissolved, and the separate members betake themselves each to his own way in the world—the duties and the friendships of domestic life are not annihilated by this dispersion; but, under the powerful influence of a felt and acknowledged relationship, the affinities of kindred spread

and multiply beyond their original precincts, to the vast increase of mutual sympathy and aid and good offices in general society. It will not, we suppose, be questioned—that a vastly greater amount of good is done by the instrumentality of others, and that the instrumentality itself is greatly more available, under the family system, to which we are prompted by the strong affections of nature, than if that system were dissolved. But the remarkable thing is, that these affections had to be provided, as so many impellent forces—guiding men onward to an arrangement the most prolific of advantage for the whole, but which no care or consideration of the general good would have led them to form. This provision for the wants of the social economy, is analogous to that, which we have already observed, for the wants of the animal economy. Neither of these interests was confided to any cold generality, whether of principle or prudence. In the one, the strong appetite of hunger supplements the deficiency of the rational principle of self-preservation. In the other, the strong family affections supplement the deficiency of the moral principle of general benevolence. Without the first, the requisite measures would not have been taken for the regular sustenance of the individual. Without the other, the requisite measures would not have been taken

for the diffused sustenance of the community at large.

4. Such is the mechanism of human society, as it comes direct, from the hand of nature or of nature's God. But many have been the attempts of human wisdom to mend and to meddle with it. Cosmopolitism, in particular, has endeavoured to substitute a sort of universal citizenship, in place of the family affections—regarding these as so many disturbing forces; because, operating only as incentives to a partial or particular benevolence, they divert the aim from that which should, it is contended, be the object of every enlightened philanthropist, the general and greatest good of the whole. It is thus that certain transcendental speculatists would cut asunder all the special affinities of our nature, in order that men, set at large from the ties and the duties of the domestic relationship, might be at liberty to prosecute a more magnificent and god-like career of virtue; and, in every single action, have respect, not to the well-being of the individual, but to the well-being of the species. And thus also, friendship and patriotism have been stigmatized, along with the family affections, as so many narrow-minded virtues, which, by their distracting influence, seduce men from that all-comprehensive virtue, whose constant study being the good of the world—a happy and regenerated world, it is the fond imagination

of some, would be the result of its universal prevalence among men.

5. Fortunately, nature is too strong for this speculation, which, therefore, has only its full being, in the reveries or the pages of those who, in authorship, may well be termed the philosophical novelists of our race. But, beside the actual strength of those special propensities in the heart of man, which no generalization can overrule, there is an utter impotency in human means or human expedients, for carrying this hollow, this heartless generalization into effect. It is easy to erect into a moral axiom, the principle of greatest happiness; and then, on the strength of it, to denounce all the special affections, and propose the substitution of a universal affection in their place. But, in prosecuting the object of this last affection, what specific and intelligible thing are they to do? How shall they go about it? What conventional scheme shall men fall upon next for obtaining the maximum of utility, after they have broken loose, each from his own little home, and have been emancipated from those intense regards, which worked so effectively and with such force of concentration there? It has never been clearly shown, how the glorious simplifications of these cosmopolites admit of being practically realized —whether by a combination, of which the chance is that all men might not agree upon it;

or by each, issuing quixotically forth of his own habitation, and labouring the best he may to realize the splendid conception by which he is fired and actuated. And it does not occur to those who would thus labour to extirpate the special affections from our nature, that it is in the indulgence of them that all conceivable happiness lies; and that, in being bereft of them, we should be in truth bereft of all the means and materials of enjoyment. And there is the utmost difference in point of effect, as well as in point of feeling, between the strong love wherewith nature hath endued us for a few particular men, and the general love wherewith philosophers would inspire us for men in the abstract—the former philanthropy leading to a devoted and sustained habit of well-directed exertion, for supplying the wants and multiplying the enjoyments of every separate household; the latter philanthropy, at once indefinite in its aim and intangible in its objects, overlooking every man just because charging itself with the oversight of all men. It is by a summation of particular utilities which each man, under the impulse of his own particular affections, contributes to the general good, that nature provides for the happiness of the world. But ambitious and aspiring man would take the charge of this happiness upon himself; and his first step would be to rid the heart of all its special affections—or, in other

words, to unsettle the moral dynamics which nature hath established there, without any other moral dynamics, either of precise direction or of operative force, to establish in their room. After having paralized all the ordinary principles of action, he would, in his newly modelled system of humanity, be able to set up no principle of action whatever. His wisdom, when thus opposed to the wisdom of nature, is utterly powerless to direct, however much, in those seasons of delusion when the merest nonentities and names find a temporary sway, it may be powerful to destroy.

6. Now there is nothing which so sets off the superior skill of one artist, as the utter failure of every other artist in his attempts to improve upon it. And so the failure of every philanthropic or political experiment which proceeds on the distrust of nature's strong and urgent and general affections, may be regarded as an impressive while experimental demonstration for the matchless wisdom of nature's God. The abortive enterprises of wild yet benevolent Utopianism; the impotent and hurtful schemes of artificial charity which so teem throughout the cities and parishes of our land; the pernicious legislation, which mars instead of medicates, whenever it intermeddles with the operations of a previous and better mechanism than its own—have all of them misgiven only because,

instead of conforming to nature, they have tried to divert her from her courses, or have thwarted and traversed the strongest of her implanted tendencies. It is thus that every attempt for taking to pieces, whether totally or partially, the actual frame-work of society, and reconstructing it in a new way or on new principles—is altogether fruitless of good; and often fruitful of sorest evil both to the happiness and virtue of the commonwealth. That economy by which the family system would have been entirely broken up; and associated men, living together in planned and regulated villages, would have laboured for the common good, and given up their children wholly undomesticated to a common education—could not have been carried into effect, without overbearing the parental affection, and other strong propensities of nature besides; and so, it was stifled in embryo, by the instant revolt of nature against it. That legislation, which, instead of overbearing, would but seduce nature from her principles, may subsist for generations—yet not without such distemper to society, as may at length amount to utter disorganization. And this is precisely the mischief which the pauperism of England hath inflicted on the habits of English families. It hath, by the most pernicious of all bribery, relaxed the ties and obligations of mutual relationship—exoncrating parents on the one hand from the

care and maintenance of their own offspring; and tempting children on the other to cast off the parents who gave them birth, and, instead of an asylum gladdened by the associations and sympathies of home, consigning them for the last closing years of weakness and decrepitude to the dreary imprisonment of a poor-house. Had the beautiful arrangements of nature not been disturbed, the relative affections which she herself has implanted would have been found strong enough, as in other countries, to have secured, through the means of a domestic economy alone, a provision both for young and old, in far greater unison with both the comfort and the virtue of families. The corrupt and demoralizing system of England might well serve as a lesson to philanthropists and statesmen, of the hazard, nay of the positive and undoubted mischief, to which the best interests of humanity are exposed—when they traverse the processes of a better mechanism instituted by the wisdom of God, through the operation of another mechanism devised by a wisdom of their own.

7. And those family relations in which all men necessarily find themselves at the outset of life, serve to strengthen, if they do not originate certain other subsequent affections of wider operation, and which bear with most important effect on the state and security of a commonwealth.

Each man's house may be regarded as a preparatory school, where he acquires in boyhood, those habits of subordination and dependence and reverence for superiors, by which he all the more readily conforms in after-life, to the useful gradations of rank and authority and wealth which obtain in the order of general society. We are aware of a cosmopolitism that would unsettle those principles which bind together the larger commonwealth of a state; and that too with still greater force and frequency, than it would unsettle those affections which bind together the little commonwealth of a family. It is easier to undermine in the hearts of subjects, their reverence for rank and station; than it is to dissolve the ties of parentage and brotherhood, or to denaturalize the hearts of children. Accordingly we may remember those seasons, when, in the form of what may be termed a moral epidemic, a certain spirit of lawlessness went abroad upon the land; and the minds of men were set at large from the habit of that homage and respect, which in more pacific times, they, without pusillanimity and in spite of themselves, do render to family or fortune or office in society. We know that in specific instances, an adequate cause is too often given, why men should cast off that veneration for rank by which they are naturally and habitually actuated—as, individually, when the prince or the

noble, however elevated, may have disgraced himself by his tyranny or his vices; or, generally, when the patrician orders of the state may have entered into some guilty combination of force and fraud against the liberties of mankind, and outraged nature is called forth to a generous and wholesome re-action against the oppressors of their species. This is the revolt of one natural principle against the abuse of another. But the case is very different—when, instead of an hostility resting on practical grounds and justified by the abuses of a principle, there is a sort of theoretical yet withal virulent and inflamed hostility abroad in the land against the principle itself—when wealth and rank without having abused their privileges, are made *per se* the objects of a jealous and resentful malignity—when the people all reckless and agog, because the dupes of designing and industrious agitators, have been led to regard every man of affluence or station as their natural enemy—and when, with the bulk of the community in this attitude of stout and sullen defiance, authority is weakened and all the natural influences of rank and wealth are suspended. Now nature never gives more effectual demonstration of her wisdom, than by the mischief which ensues on the abjuration of her own principles; and never is the lesson thus held forth more palpable and convincing, than when

respect for station and respect for office cease to be operating principles in society. We are abundantly sensible that both mighty possessions and the honours of an industrious ancestry may be disjoined from individual talent and character—nay, that they may meet in the person of one so utterly weak or worthless, as that our reverence because of the adventitious circumstances in which he is placed, may be completely overborne by our contempt either for the imbecility or the moral turpitude by which he is deformed. But this is only the example of a contest between two principles, and of a victory by the superior over the inferior one. We are not, however, because of the inferiority of a principle to lose sight of its existence; or to betray such an imperfect discernment and analysis of the human mind, as to deny the reality of any one principle, because liable to be modified, or kept in check, or even for the time rendered altogether powerless, by the interposition and the conflict of another principle. If, on the one hand, rank may be so disjoined from righteousness as to forfeit all its claims to respect—on the other hand, to be convinced that these claims are the objects of a natural and universal acknowledgment, and have therefore a foundation in the actual constitution of human nature, let us only consider the effect, when pre-eminent rank and pre-eminent or even but fair and

ordinary righteousness, meet together in the person of the same individual. The effect of such a composition upon human feelings may well persuade us that, while a respect for righteousness admitted by all enters as one ingredient, a respect for rank has its distinct and substantive being also as another ingredient. We have the former ingredient by itself in a state of separation, and are therefore most sensible of its presence, when the object of contemplation is a virtuous man. But we are distinctly sensible to the superaddition of the latter ingredient, when, instead of a virtuous man, the object of contemplation is a virtuous monarch—though it becomes more palpable still, when it too is made to exist in a state of separation, which it does, when the monarch is neither hateful for his vices nor very estimable for his virtues; but stands forth in the average possession of those moralities and of that intellect which belong to common and every-day humanity. Even such a monarch has only to appear among his subjects; and, in all ordinary times, he will be received with the greetings of an honest and heartfelt loyalty, while any unwonted progress through his dominions is sure to be met all over the land, by the acclamations of a generous enthusiasm. Even the sturdiest demagogue, if he come within the sphere of the royal presence, cannot resist the infection of that common senti-

ment by which all are actuated; but, as if struck with a moral impotency, he also, carried away by the fascination, is constrained to feel and to acknowledge its influence. Some there are, who might affect to despise human nature for such an exhibition, and indignantly exclaim that men are born to be slaves. But the truth is, that there is nothing prostrate, nothing pusillanimous in the emotion at all. Instead of this, it is a lofty chivalrous emotion, of which the most exalted spirits are the most susceptible, and which all might indulge without any forfeiture of their native or becoming dignity. We do not affirm of this respect either for the sovereignty of an empire, or for the chieftainship of a province—that it forms an original or constituent part of our nature. It is enough for our argument, if it be a universal result of the circumstances in every land, where such gradations of power and property are established. In a word, it is the doing of nature, and not of man; and if man, in the proud and presumptuous exercise of his own wisdom, shall lift his rebel hand against the wisdom of nature, and try to uproot this principle from human hearts—he will find that it cannot be accomplished, without tearing asunder one of the strongest of those ligaments, which bind together the component

parts of human society into a harmonious and well-adjusted mechanism. And it is then that the wisdom which made nature, will demonstrate its vast superiority over the wisdom which would mend it—when the desperate experiment of the latter has been tried and found wanting. There are certain restraining forces (and reverence for rank and station is one of them) which never so convincingly announce their own importance to the peace and stability of the commonwealth, as in those seasons of popular frenzy, when, for a time, they are slackened or suspended. For it is then that the vessel of the state, as if slipped from her moorings, drifts headlong among the surges of insurrectionary violence, till, as the effect of this great national effervescence, the land mourns over its ravaged fields and desolated families; when, after the sweeping anarchy has blown over it, and the sore chastisement has been undergone, the now schooled and humbled people seek refuge anew in those very principles, which they had before traduced and discarded: And it will be fortunate if, when again settled down in the quietude of their much needed and much longed-for repose, there be not too vigorous a re-action of those conservative influences, which, in the moment of their wantonness, they had flung so recklessly

away—in virtue of which the whips may become scorpions, and the mild and well-balanced monarchy may become a grinding despotism.

8. Next to the wisdom which nature discovers in her implantation or developement of those affections, by which society is parcelled down into separate families; is the wisdom which she discovers in those other affections, by which the territory of a nation, and all upon it that admits of such a distribution, is likewise parcelled and broken off into separate properties. Both among the analysts of the human mind, and among metaphysical jurists and politicians, there is to be found much obscure and unsatisfactory speculation respecting those principles, whether elementary or complex, by which property is originated and by which property is upholden. We are not called to enter upon any subtle analysis for the purpose of ascertaining either what that is which gives birth to the possessory feeling on the part of an owner, or what that is which leads to such a universal recognition and respect for his rights in general society. It will be enough if we can evince that neither of these is a factitious product, devised by the wisdom or engendered by the authority of patriots and legislators, deliberating on what was best for the good and order of a community; but that both of them are the results of a prior wisdom, employed,

not in framing a constitution for a state, but in framing a constitution for human nature. It will suffice to demonstrate this, if we can show, that, in very early childhood, there are germinated both a sense of property and a respect for the property of others; and that, long before the children have been made the subjects of any artificial training on the thing in question, or are at all capable of any anticipation, or even wish, respecting the public and collective well-being of the country at large. Just as the affection of a mother is altogether special, and terminates upon the infant, without any calculation as to the superiority of the family system over the speculative systems of the cosmopolites; and just as the appetite of hunger impels to the use of food, without the least regard, for the time being, to the support or preservation of the animal economy—so, most assuredly, do the desires or notions of property, and even the principles by which it is limited, spring up in the breasts of children, without the slightest apprehension, on their part, of its vast importance to the social economy of the world. It is the provision, not of man, but of God.

9. That is my property, to the use and enjoyment of which I, without the permission of others, am free, in a manner that no other is; and it is mine and mine only, in as far as this

use and enjoyment are limited to myself—and others, apart from any grant or permission by me, are restrained from the like use and the like enjoyment. Now the first tendency of a child, instead of regarding only certain things, as those to the use and enjoyment of which it alone is free, is to regard itself as alike free to the use and enjoyment of all things. We should say that it regards the whole of external nature as a vast common, but for this difference—that, instead of regarding nature as free to all, it rather regards it as free to itself alone. When others intermeddle with any one thing, in a way that suits not its fancy or pleasure, it resents and storms and exclaims like one bereft of its rights—so that, instead of regarding the universe as a common, it were more accurate to say, that it regarded the whole as its own property, or itself as the universal proprietor of all on which it may have cast a pleased or a wishful eye. Whatever it grasps, it feels to be as much its own as it does the fingers which grasp it. And not only do its claims extend to all within its reach, but to all within the field of its vision---insomuch, that it will even stretch forth its hands to the moon in the firmament; and wreak its displeasure on the nurse, for not bringing the splendid bauble within its grasp. Instead then of saying, that, at this particular stage, it knows not how to appropriate any thing, it were more

accurate to say, that a universal tyrant and monopolist, it would claim and appropriate all things—exacting from the whole of nature a subserviency to its caprices; and, the little despot of its establishment, giving forth its intimations and its mandates, with the expectation, and often with the real power and authority of instant obedience. We before said that its anger was coextensive with the capacity of sensation; and we now say that, whatever its rectified notion of property may be, it has the original notion of an unlimited range over which itself at least may expatiate, without let or contradiction—the self-constituted proprietor of a domain, wide as its desires, and on which none may interfere against its will, without awakening in its bosom, somewhat like the sense and feeling of an injurious molestation.*

10. And it is instructive to observe the pro-

* From what has been already said of resentment, it would appear, that the instinctive feeling of property, and instinctive anger are in a state of co-relation with each other. It is by offence being rendered to the former, that the latter is called forth. Anterior to a sense of justice, our disposition is to arrogate every thing—and it is then that we are vulnerable to anger from all points of the compass. Let another meddle, to our annoyance, with any thing whatever, at this early stage, and we shall feel the very emotion of anger, which in a higher stage of moral and mental cultivation, is only called forth by his meddling with that which really and rightfully belongs to us. The sense of justice, instead of originating either the emotion of anger, or a sense of property, has the effect to limit and restrain both.

cess, by which this original notion of property is at length rectified into the subsequent notion, which obtains in general society. For this purpose we must enquire what the circumstances are which limit and determine that sense of property, which was quite general and unrestricted before, to certain special things, of which the child learns to feel that they are peculiarly its own—and that too, in a manner which distinguishes them from all other things, which are not so felt to be its own. The child was blind to any such distinction before—its first habit being to arrogate and monopolize all things; and the question is, what those circumstances are, which serve to signalize some things, to which, its feelings of property, now withdrawn from wide and boundless generality, are exclusively and specifically directed. It will make conclusively for our argument, if it shall appear, that this sense of property, even in its posterior and rectified form, is the work of nature, operating on the hearts of children; and not the work of man, devising, in the maturity of his political wisdom, such a regulated system of things, as might be best for the order and well being of society.

11. This matter then might be illustrated by the contests of very young children, and by the manner in which these are adjusted to the acquiescence and satisfaction of them all. We

might gather a lesson even from the quarrel which sometimes arises among them, about a matter so small as their right to the particular chairs of a room. If one for example, have just sat on a chair, though only for a few minutes, and then left it for a moment—it will feel itself injured, if, on returning, it shall find the chair in the possession of another occupier. The brief occupation which it has already had, gives it the feeling of a right to the continued occupation of it—insomuch, that, when kept out by an intruder, it has the sense of having been wrongously dispossessed. The particular chair of which it was for some time the occupier, is the object of a special possessory affection or feeling, which it attaches to no other chair; and by which it stands invested in its own imagination, as being, for the time, the only rightful occupier. This then may be regarded as a very early indication of that possessory feeling, which is afterwards of such extensive influence in the economy of social life—a feeling so strong, as often of itself to constitute a plea, not only sufficient in the apprehension of the claimant, but sufficient in the general sense of the community, for substantiating the right of many a proprietor.

12. But there is still another primitive ingredient which enters into this feeling of property; and we call it primitive, because anterior to the sanctions or the application of law. Let the child

in addition to the plea that it had been the recent occupier of the chair in question, be able further to advance in argument for its right—that, with its own hands, it had just placed it beside the fire, and thereby given additional value to the occupation of it. This reason is both felt by the child itself, and will be admitted by other children even of a very tender age, as a strengthener of its claim. It exemplifies the second great principle on which the natural right of property rests—even that every man is proprietor of the fruit of his own labour; and that to whatever extent he may have impressed additional value on any given thing by the work of his own hands, to that extent, at least, he should be held the owner of it.

13. This then seems the way, in which the sense of his right to any given thing arises in the heart of the claimant; but something more must be said to account for the manner in which this right is deferred to by his companions. It accounts for the manner, in which the possessory feeling arises in the hearts of one and all of them, when similarly circumstanced; but it does not account for the manner in which this possessory feeling, in the heart of each, is respected by all his fellows—so that he is suffered to remain, in the secure and unmolested possession of that which he rightfully claims. The circumstances which originate the sense of pro-

perty, serve to explain this one fact, the existence of a possessory feeling, in the heart of every individual who is actuated thereby. But the deference rendered to this feeling by any other individuals, is another and a distinct fact; and we must refer to a distinct principle from that of the mere sense of property, for the explanation of it. This new or distinct principle is a sense of equity—or that which prompts to likeness or equality, between the treatment which I should claim of others and my treatment of them; and in virtue of which, I should hold it unrighteous and unfair, if I disregarded or inflicted violence on the claim of another, which, in the same circumstances with him, I am conscious that I should have felt, and would have advanced for myself. Had I been the occupier of that chair, in like manner with the little claimant who is now insisting on the possession of it, I should have felt and claimed precisely as he is doing. Still more, had I like him placed it beside the fire, I should have felt what he is now expressing—a still more distinct and decided right to it. If conscious of an identity of feeling between me and another in the same circumstances—then let my moral nature be so far evolved as to feel the force of this consideration; and, under the operation of a sense of equity, I shall defer to the very claim, which I should myself have urged, had I been similarly

placed. And it is marvellous, how soon the hearts of children discover a sensibility to this consideration, and how soon they are capable of becoming obedient to the power of it. It is, in fact, the principle on which a thousand contests of the nursery are settled, and many thousand more are prevented; what else would be an incessant scramble of rival and ravenous cupidity, being mitigated and reduced to a very great, though unknown and undefinable extent, by the sense of justice coming into play. It is altogether worthy of remark, however, that the sense of property is anterior to the sense of justice, and comes from an anterior and distinct source in our nature. It is not justice which originates the proprietary feeling in the heart of any individual. It only arbitrates between the proprietary claims and feelings of different individuals—after these had previously arisen by the operation of other principles in the human constitution. Those writers on jurisprudence are sadly and inextricably puzzled, who imagine that justice presided over the first ordinations of property—utterly at a loss as they must be, to find out the principle that could guide her initial movements. Justice did not create property; but found it already created—her only office being to decide between the antecedent claims of one man and another: And, in the discharge of this office, she but compares the rights which

each of them can allege, as founded either on the length of undisputed and undisposed of possession, or on the value they had impressed on the thing at issue by labour of their own. In other words, she bears respect to those two great primitive ingredients by which property is constituted, before that she had ever bestowed any attention, or given any award whatever regarding it. The matter may be illustrated by the peculiar relation in which each man stands to his own body, as being, in a certain view, the same with the peculiar relation in which each man stands to his own property. His sensitive feelings are hurt, by the infliction of a neighbour's violence upon the one; and his proprietary feelings are hurt, by the encroachment of a neighbour's violence upon the other. But justice no more originated the proprietary, than it did the sensitive feelings—no more gave me the peculiar affection which I feel for the property I now occupy as my own, than it gave me my peculiar affection for the person which I now occupy as my own. Justice pronounces on the iniquity of any hurtful infliction by us on the person of another—seeing that such an infliction upon our own person, to which we stand similarly related, would be resented by ourselves. And Justice, in like manner, pronounces on the inequality or iniquity of any hurtful encroachment by us on the property of another—also seeing, that such

an encroachment upon our own property, to which we stand similarly related, would be felt and resented by ourselves. Man feels one kind of pain, when the hand which belongs to him is struck by another; and he feels another kind of pain, when some article which it holds, and which he conceives to belong to him, is wrested by another from its grasp. But it was not Justice which instituted either the animal economy in the one case, or the proprietary economy in the other. Justice found them both already instituted. Property is not the creation of justice; but is in truth a prior creation. Justice did not form this material, or command it into being; but in the course of misunderstanding or controversy between man and man, property, a material pre-existent or already made, forms the subject of many of those questions which are put into her hands.

14. But, recurring to the juvenile controversy which we have already imagined for the purpose of illustration, there is still a third way in which we may conceive it to be conclusively and definitively settled. The parents may interpose their authority, and assign his own particular chair to each member of the household. The instant effect of such a decree, in fixing and distinguishing the respective properties in all time coming, has led, we believe, to a misconception regarding the real origin of property—in consequence of a

certain obscure analogy between this act of parents or legislators over the family of a household, and a supposed act of rulers or legislators over the great family of a nation. Now, not only have the parents this advantage over the magistrates—that the property which they thus distribute is previously their own; but there is both a power of enforcement and a disposition to acquiescence within the limits of a home, which exist in an immeasurably weaker degree within the limits of a kingdom. Still, with all this superiority on the part of the household legislators, it would even be their wisdom, to conform their decree as much as possible to those natural principles and feelings of property, which had been in previous exercise among their children—to have respect, in fact, when making distribution of the chairs, both to their habits of previous occupation, and to the additional value which any of them may have impressed upon their favourite seats, by such little arts of upholstery or mechanics, as they are competent to practise. A wise domestic legislator would not thwart, but rather defer to the claims and expectations which nature had previously founded. And still more a national legislator or statesman, would evince his best wisdom, by, instead of traversing the constitution of property which nature had previously established, greatly deferring to that sense of a possessory right, which long and un-

questioned occupation so universally gives; and greatly deferring to the principle, that, whatever the fruit of each man's labour may be, it rightfully, and therefore should legitimately belong to him. A government could, and at the termination of a revolutionary storm, often does, traverse these principles; but not without the excitement of a thousand heart-burnings, and so the establishment of a strong counteraction to its own authority in the heart of its dominions. It is the dictate of sound policy—that the natural, on the one hand, and the legal or political on the other, should quadrate as much as possible. And thus, instead of saying with Dr. Paley that property derived its constitution and being from the law of the land—we should say that law never exhibits a better understanding of her own place and functions, than when, founding on materials already provided, she feels that her wisest part is but to act as an auxiliary, and to ratify that prior constitution which nature had put into her hands.

15. In this exposition which we have now attempted of the origin and rights of property, we are not insensible to the mighty use of law. By its power of enforcement, it perpetuates or defends from violation that existent order of things which itself had established, or, rather, which itself had ratified. Even though at its first ordinations it had contra-

vened those natural principles which enter into the foundation of property, these very principles will, in time, re-appear in favour of the new system, and yield to it a firmer and a stronger support with every day of its continuance. Whatever fraud or force may have been concerned at the historical commencement of the present and actual distribution of property—the then new possessors have at length become old; and, under the canopy and protection of law, the natural rights have been superadded to the factitious or the political. Law has guaranteed to each proprietor a long continued occupation, till a strong and inveterate possessory feeling has taken root and arisen in every heart. And secure of this occupation, each may, in the course of years, have mixed up to an indefinite amount, the improvements of his own skill and labour with those estates—which, as the fruit whether of anarchy or of victorious invasion, had fallen into his hands. So that these first and second principles of natural jurisprudence, whatever violence may have been done to them at the overthrow of a former regime, are again fostered into all their original efficacy and strength during the continuance of a present one. Insomuch, that if, at the end of half a century, those outcasts of a great revolutionary hurricane, the descendants of a confiscated noblesse, were to rally

and combine for the recovery of their ancient domains—they would be met in the encounter, not by the force of the existing government only, but by the outraged and resentful feelings of the existing proprietors, whose possessory and prescriptive rights, now nurtured into full and firm establishment, would, in addition to the sense of interest, enlist even the sense of justice upon their side. Apart from the physical, did we but compute the moral forces which enter into such a conflict, it will often be found that the superiority is in favour of the actual occupiers. Those feelings, on the one hand, which are associated with the recollection of a now departed ancestry and their violated rights, are found to be inoperative and feeble, when brought into comparison or collision with that strength which nature has annexed to the feelings of actual possession. Regarded as but a contest of sentiment alone, the disposition to recover is not so strong as the disposition to retain. The recollection that these were once my parental acres, though wrested from the hand of remote ancestors by anarchists and marauders, would not enlist so great or so practical a moral force on the aggressive side of a new warfare, as the reflection that these are now my possessed acres, which, though left but by immediate ancestors, I have been accustomed from infancy to call my own, would enlist on the side of

the defensive. In the course of generations, those sedative influences, which tend to the preservation of the existing order wax stronger and stronger; and those disturbing influences, which tend to the restoration of the ancient order, wax weaker and weaker—till man at last ceases to charge himself with a task so infinitely above his strength, as the adjustment of the quarrels and the accumulated wrongs of the centuries which have gone by. In other words, the constitution of law in regard to property, which is the work of man, may be so framed as to sanction, and, therefore, to encourage the enormities which have been perpetrated by the force of arms—while the constitution of the mind in regard to property, which is the work of nature, is so framed, as, with conservative virtue, to be altogether on the side of perpetuity and peace.

16. Had a legislator of supreme wisdom and armed with despotic power been free to establish the best scheme for augmenting the wealth and the comforts of human society—he could have devised nothing more effectual than that existing constitution of property, which obtains so generally throughout the world; and by which, each man, secure within the limits of his own special and recognized possession, might claim as being rightly and originally his, the fruit of all the labour which he may choose to expend

upon it. But this was not left to the discovery of man, or to any ordinations of his consequent upon that discovery. He was not led to this arrangement by the experience of its consequences; but prompted to it by certain feelings, as much prior to that experience, as the appetite of hunger is prior to our experience of the use of food. In this matter, too, the wisdom of nature has anticipated the wisdom of man, by providing him with original principles of her own. Man was not left to find out the direction in which his benevolence might be most productive of enjoyment to others; but he has been irresistibly, and, as far as he is concerned, blindly impelled thereto by means of a family affection—which, concentrating his efforts on a certain few, has made them a hundred times more prolific of benefit to mankind than if all had been left to provide the best they may for the whole, without a precise or determinate impulse to any. And in like manner, man was not left to find out the direction in which his industry might be made most productive of the materials of enjoyment; but, with the efforts of each concentrated by means of a special possessory affection on a certain portion of the territory, the universal produce is incalculably greater than under a medley system of indifference, with every field alike

open to all, and, therefore, alike unreclaimed from the wilderness—unless one man shall consent to labour it in seed time, although another should reap the fruit of his labour in harvest. It is good that man was not trusted with the whole disintanglement of this chaos—but that a natural jurisprudence, founded on the constitution of the human mind, so far advances and facilitates the task of that artificial jurisprudence, which frames the various codes or constitutions of human law. It is well that nature has connected with the past and actual possession of any thing, so strong a sense of right to its continued possession; and that she has so powerfully backed this principle, by means of another as strongly and universally felt as the former, even that each man has a right to possess the fruit of his own industry. The human legislator has little more to do than to confirm, or rather to promulgate and make known his determination to abide by principles already felt and recognized by all men. Wanting these, he could have fixed nothing, he could have perpetuated nothing. The legal constitution of every state, in its last and finished form, comes from the hand of man. But the great and natural principles, which secure for these constitutions the acceptance of whole communities—implanted in man from his birth, or at least evincing their

presence and power in very early childhood—these are what bespeak the immediate hand of God.

17. But these principles, strongly conservative though they be, on the side of existing property do not at all times prevent a revolution—which is much more frequently, however, a revolution of power than of property. But when such is the degree of violence abroad in society, that even the latter is effected—this most assuredly, does not arise from any decay or intermission of the possessory feelings, that we have just been expounding; but from the force and fermentation of other causes which prevail in opposition to these, and in spite of them. And, after that such revolution has done its work and ejected the old dynasty of proprietors, the mischief to them may be as irrecoverable, as if their estates had been wrested from them, by an irruption from the waters of the ocean, by earthquake, or the sweeping resistless visitation of any other great physical calamity. The moral world has its epochs and its transitions as well as the natural, during which the ordinary laws are not suspended but only for the time overborne; but this does not hinder the recurrence and full reinstatement of these laws during the long eras of intermediate repose. And it is marvellous, with what certainty and speed, the conservative influences, of which we have

treated, gather around a new system of things, with whatever violence, and even injustice, it may have been ushered into the world—insomuch that, under the guardianship of the powers which be, those links of a natural jurisprudence, now irretrievably torn from the former, are at length transferred in all their wonted tenacity to the existing proprietors; rivetting each of them to his own several property, and altogether establishing a present order of as great firmness and strength as ever belonged to the order which went before it, but which is now superseded and forgotten. It is well that nature hath annexed so potent a charm to actual possession; and a charm which strengthens with every year and day of its continuance. This may not efface the historical infamy of many ancient usurpations. But the world cannot be kept in a state of perpetual effervescence; and now that the many thousand wrongs of years gone by, as well as the dead on whom they have been inflicted, are fading into deep oblivion—it is well for the repose of its living generations, that, in virtue of the strong possessory feelings which nature causes to arise in the hearts of existing proprietors and to be sympathized with by all other men, the possessors *de facto* have at length the homage done to them of possessors *de jure;* strong in their own consciousness of right, and strong in the recognition thereof by all their contemporaries.

18. But ere we have completed our views upon this subject, we must shortly dwell on a principle of very extensive application in morals; and which itself forms a striking example of a most beauteous and beneficent adaptation in the constitution of the human mind to the needs and the well-being of human society. It may be thus announced, briefly and generally:—however strong the special affections of our nature may be, yet, if along with them there be but a principle of equity in the mind, then, these affections, so far from concentrating our selfish regards upon their several objects to the disregard and injury of others, will but enhance our respect and our sympathy for the like affections in other men.

19. This may be illustrated, in the first instance, by the equity observed between man and man, in respect to the bodies which they wear—endowed, as we may suppose them to be, with equal, at least with like capacities of pain and suffering from external violence. To inflict that very pain upon another which I should resent or shrink from in agony, if inflicted upon myself—this to all sense of justice appears a very palpable iniquity. Let us now conceive then, that the sentient frame-work of each of the parties was made twice more sensitive, or twice more alive to pain and pungency of feeling than it actually is. In one view it

may be said that each would become twice more selfish than before. Each would feel a double interest in warding off external violence from himself; and so be doubly more anxious for his own protection and safety. But, with the very same moral nature as ever, each, now aware of the increased sensibility, not merely in himself but in his fellows, would feel doubly restrained from putting forth upon him a hand of violence. So, grant him to have but a sense of equity—and, exactly in proportion as he became tender of himself, would he become tender of another also. If the now superior exquisiteness of his own frame afforded him a topic, on which, what may be called his selfishness would feel more intensely than before—the now superior exquisiteness of another's frame would, in like manner, afford a topic, on which his sense of justice would feel more intensely than before. It is even as when men of very acute sensibilities company together—each has, on that very account, a more delicate and refined consideration for the feelings of all the rest; and it is only among men of tougher pellicle and rigid fibre, where coarseness and freedom prevail, because there coarseness and freedom are not felt to be offensive. Grant me but a sense of equity—and the very fineness of my sensations which weds me so much more to the care and the defence of my own person, would also, on

the imagination of a similar fineness in a fellow-man, restrain me so much more from the putting forth of any violence upon his person. If I had any compassion at all, or any horror at the injustice of inflicting upon another, that which I should feel to be a cruelty, if inflicted upon myself—I would experience a greater recoil of sympathy from the blow that was directed to the surface of a recent wound upon another, precisely as I would feel a severer agony in a similar infliction upon myself. So, there is nothing in the quickness of my physical sensibilities, and by which I am rendered more alive to the care and the guardianship of my own person—there is nothing in this to blunt, far less to extinguish my sensibilities for other men. Nay, it may give a quicker moral delicacy to all the sympathies which I before felt for them. And especially, the more sensitive I am to the hurts and the annoyances which others bring upon my own person, the more scrupulous may I be of being in any way instrumental to the hurt or the annoyance of others.

20. The same holds true between man and man, not merely of the bodies which they wear, but of the families which belong to them. Each man, by nature, hath a strong affection for his own offspring—the young whom he hath reared, and with whom the daily habit of converse

under the same roof, hath strengthened all the original affinities that subsisted between them. But one man a parent knows that another man, also a parent, is actuated by the very same appropriate sensibilities towards his offspring; and nought remains but to graft on these separate and special affections in each, a sympathy between one neighbour and another; that there might be a mutual respect for each other's family affections. After the matter is advanced thus far, we can be at no loss to perceive, that, in proportion to the strength of the parental affection with each, will be the strength of the fellow-feeling that each has with the affection of the other—insomuch that he who bears in his heart the greatest tenderness for his own offspring, would feel the greatest revolt against an act of severity towards the offspring of his friend. Now it is altogether so with the separate and original sense of property in each of two neighbours, and a sense of justice grafted thereupon—even as a mutual neighbourlike sympathy may be grafted on the separate family affections. One man a proprietor, linked by many ties with that which he hath possessed and been in the habitual use and management of for years, is perfectly conscious of the very same kind of affinity, between another man a proprietor and that which belongs to him. It is not the justice which so links him to his own property, any

more than it is the sympathy with his neighbour which has linked him to his own children. But the justice hath given him a respectful feeling for his neighbour's rights, even as the sympathy would give him a tenderness for his neighbour's offspring. And so far from there being aught in the strength of the appropriating principle that relaxes this deference to the rights of his neighbour, the second principle may in fact grow with the growth, and strengthen with the strength of the first one.

21. For the purpose of maintaining an equitable regard, or an equitable conduct to others—it is no more necessary that we should reduce or extirpate the special affections of our nature, than that, in order to make room for the love of another, we should discharge from the bosom all love of ourselves. So far from this, the affection we have for ourselves, or for those various objects which by the constitution of our nature we are formed to seek after and to delight in—is the measure of that duteous regard which we owe to others, and of that duteous respect which we owe to all their rights and all their interests. The very highest behest of social morality, while at the same time the most comprehensive of its rules, is that we should love our neighbour as we do ourselves. Love to our neighbour is the thing which this rule measures off—and love to ourselves is the thing which

it measures by. These two then, the social and the selfish affections, instead of being as they too often are inversely, might under a virtuous regimen be directly proportional to each other. At all events the way to advance or magnify the one, is not surely to weaken or abridge the other. The strength of certain prior affections which by nature we do have, is the standard of certain posterior affections which morality tells that we ought to have. Morality neither planted these prior affections, nor does she enjoin us to extirpate them. They were inserted by the hand of nature for the most useful purposes; and morality, instead of demolishing her work, applies the rule and compass to it for the construction of her own.

22. It was not justice which presided over the original distribution of property. It was not she who assigned to each man his separate field, any more than it was she who assigned to each man his separate family. It was nature that did both, by investing with such power those anterior circumstances of habit and possession, which gave rise,—first, to the special love that each man bears to his own children, and secondly, to the special love that each man bears to his own acres. Had there been no such processes beforehand, for thus isolating the parental regards of each on that certain household group which nature placed under his roof,

and the proprietary regards of each on that certain local territory which history casts into his possession: or, had each man been so constituted, that, instead of certain children whom he felt to be his own, he was alike loose to them or susceptible of a like random and indiscriminate affection for any children; or, instead of certain lands which he felt to be his own, he was alike loose to them or susceptible of a like tenacious adherence to any lands—had such been the rudimental chaos which nature put into the hands of man for the exercise of his matured faculties, neither his morality nor his wisdom would have enabled him to unravel it. But nature prepared for man an easier task; and when justice arose to her work, she found a territory so far already partitioned, and each proprietor linked by a strong and separate tie of peculiar force to that part which he himself did occupy. She found this to be the land which one man wont to possess and cultivate, and that to be the land which another man wont to possess and cultivate—the destination, not originally, of justice, but of accident, which her office nevertheless is not to reverse, but to confirm. We hold it a beautiful part of our constitution, that, the firmer the tenacity wherewith the first man adheres to his own, once that justice takes her place among the other principles of his nature, the

prompter will be his recognition of the second man's right to his own. If each man sat more loosely to his own portion, each would have viewed more loosely the right of his neighbour to the other portion. The sense of property, anterior to justice, exists in the hearts of all; and the principle of justice, subsequent to property, does not extirpate these special affections, but only arbitrates between them. In proportion to the felt strength of the proprietary affection in the hearts of each; will be the strength of that deference which each, in so far as justice has the mastery over him, renders to the rights and the property of his neighbour. These are the principles of the *histoire raisonnée*, that has been more or less exemplified in all the countries of the world; and which might still be exemplified in the appropriation of a desert island. If we had not had the prior and special determinations of nature, justice would have felt the work of appropriation to be an inextricable problem. If we had not had justice, with each man obeying only the impulse of his own affections and unobservant of the like affection of others, we should have been kept in a state of constant and interminable war. Under the guidance of nature and justice together, the whole earth might have been parcelled out, without conflict and without interference.

23. If a strong self-interest in one's person may not only be consistent with, but, by the aid of the moral sense, may be conducive to a proportionally strong principle of forbearance from all injury to the persons of other men—why may not the very same law be at work in regard to property as to person? The fondness wherewith one nourishes and cherishes his own flesh, might, we have seen, enhance his sympathy and his sense of justice for that of other men; and so, we affirm, might it be of the fondness wherewith one nourishes and cherishes his own field. The relation in which each man stands to his own body, was anterior to the first dawnings of his moral nature; and his instinctive sensibilities of pain and suffering, when any violence is inflicted, were also anterior. But as his moral perceptions expand, and he considers others beside himself who are similarly related to their bodies—these very susceptibilities not only lead him to recoil from the violence that is offered to himself; but they lead him to refrain from the offering of violence to other men. They may have an air of selfishness at the first; yet so far from being obstacles in the way of justice, they are indispensable helps to it. And so may each man stand related to a property as well as to a person; and by ties that bind him to it, ere he thought of his neighbour's property at all—by instinctive affec-

tions, which operated previously to a sense of justice in his bosom; and yet which, so far from acting as a thwart upon his justice to others, give additional impulse to all his observations of it. He feels what has passed within his own bosom, in reference to the field that he has possessed, and has laboured, and that has for a time been respected by society as his; and he is aware of the very same feeling in the breast of a neighbour in relation to another field; and in very proportion to the strength of his own feeling, does he defer to that of his fellow-men. It is at this point that the sense of justice begins to operate—not for the purpose of leading him to appropriate his own, for this he has already done; but for the purpose of leading him to respect the property of others. It was not justice which gave to either of them at the first that feeling of property, which each has in his own separate domain; any more than it was justice which gave to either of them that feeling of affection which each has for his own children. It is after, and not before these feelings are formed, that justice steps in with her golden rule, of not doing to others as we would not others to do unto us; and, all conscious as we are of the dislike and resentment we should feel on the invasion of our property, it teaches to defer to a similar dislike and a similar resentment in other men. And, so

far from this original and instinctive regard for this property which is my own serving at all to impair, when once the moral sense comes into play, it enhances my equitable regard for the property of others. It is just with me the proprietor, as it is with me the parent. My affection for my own family does not prompt me to appropriate the family of another; but it strengthens my sympathetic consideration for the tenderness and feeling of their own parent towards them. My affection for my own field does not incline me to seize upon that of another man; but it strengthens my equitable consideration for all the attachments and the claims which its proprietor has upon it. In proportion to the strength of that instinct which binds me to my own offspring, is the sympathy I feel with the tenderness of other parents. In proportion to the strength of that instinct which binds me to my own property, is the sense of equity I feel towards the rights of all other proprietors. It was not justice which gave either the one instinct or the other; but justice teaches each man to bear respect to that instinct in another, which he feels to be of powerful operation in his own bosom.

24. It is in virtue of my sentient nature that I am so painfully alive to the violence done upon my own body, as to recoil from the infliction of it upon myself. And it is in virtue of my moral

nature, that, alive to the pain of other bodies than my own, I refrain from the infliction of it upon them. It is not justice which gives the sensations; but justice pronounces on the equal respect that is due to the sensations of all. Neither does justice give the sensations of property, but it finds them; and pronounces on the respect which each owes to the sensations of all the rest. It was not justice which gave the personal feeling; neither is it justice which gives the possessory feeling. Justice has nothing to do with the process by which this body came to be my own; and although now, perhaps, there is not a property, at least in the civilized world, which may not have passed into the hand of their actual possessors, by a series of purchases, over which justice had the direction—yet there was a time when it might have been said, that justice has had nothing to do with the process by which this garden came to be my own; and yet, then as well as now, it would have been the utterance of a true feeling, that he who touches this garden, touches the apple of mine eye. And it is as much the dictate of justice, that we shall respect the one sensation as the other. He, indeed, who has the greatest sensitiveness, whether about his own person or his own property, will, with an equal principle of justice in his constitution, have the greatest sympathy, both for the personal and the proprietary rights of

others. This view of it saves all the impracticable mysticism that has gathered around the speculations of those, who conceive of justice, as presiding over the first distributions of property; and so have fallen into the very common mistake, of trying to account for that which had been provided for by the wisdom of nature, as if it had been provided by the wisdom and the principle of man. At the first allocations of property, justice may have had no hand in them. They were altogether fortuitous. One man set himself down, perhaps on a better soil than his neighbour, and chalked out for himself a larger territory, at a time when there was none who interfered or who offered to share it with him; and so he came to as firm a possessory feeling in reference to his wider domain, as the other has in reference to his smaller. Our metaphysical jurists are sadly puzzled to account for the original inequalities of property, and for the practical acquiescence of all men in the actual and very unequal distribution of it—having recourse to an original social compact, and to other fictions alike visionary. But if there be truth in our theory, it is just as easy to explain, why the humble proprietor, would no more think of laying claim to certain acres of his rich neighbour's estate because it was larger than his own, than he would think of laying claim to certain children of his neighbour's

family because it was larger—or even of laying claim to certain parts of his neighbour's person because it was larger. He is sufficiently acquainted with his own nature to be aware, that, were the circumstances changed, he should feel precisely as his affluent neighbour does; and he respects the feeling accordingly. He knows that, if himself at the head of a larger property, he would have the same affection for all its fields that the actual proprietor has; and that, if at the head of a larger family, he would have the same affection with the actual parent for all its children. It is by making justice come in at the right place, that is, not prior to these strong affections of nature but posterior to them, that the perplexities of this inquiry are done away. The principle on which it arbitrates, is, not the comparative magnitude of the properties, but the relative feelings of each actual possessor towards each actual property; and if it find these in every instance, to be the very feelings which all men would have in the circumstances belonging to that instance—it attempts no new distribution, but gives its full sanction to the distribution which is already before it. This is the real origin and upholder of that conservative influence which binds together the rich and the poor in society; and thus it is that property is respected throughout all its gradations.

25. It is from the treatment of an original as

if it were a derived affection, that the whole obscurity on this topic has arisen. It is quite as impossible to educe the possessory feeling from an anterior sense of justice, or from a respect for law—as it is to educe the parental feeling from a previous and comprehensive regard for the interests of humanity. There is no doubt that the general good is best promoted by the play of special family affections; but this is the work of nature, and not the work of man. And there is no doubt that the wealth and comfort of society are inconceivably augmented by those influences, which bind each individual nearly as much to his own property, as he is bound to his own offspring. But in the one case as well as the other, there were certain instinctive regards that came first, and the office of justice is altogether a subsequent one; not to put these regards into the breast of any, but to award the equal deference that is due to the regards of all —insomuch that the vast domain of one individual, perhaps transmitted to him from generation to generation, throughout the lengthened series of an ancestry, whose feet are now upon the earth, but whose top reaches the clouds and is there lost in distant and obscure antiquity—is, to the last inch of its margin, under a guardianship of justice as unviolable, as that which assures protection and ownership to the humble possessor of one solitary acre. The right of property

is not the less deferred to, either because its divisions are unequal, or because its origin is unknown. And, even when history tells us that it is founded on some deed of iniquitous usurpation, there is a charm in the continued occupation, that prevails and has the mastery over our most indignant remembrance of the villany of other days. It says much for the strength of the possessory feeling, that, even in less than half a century, it will, if legal claims are meanwhile forborne, cast into obliteration, all the deeds, and even all the delinquencies, which attach to the commencement of a property. At length the prescriptive right bears every thing before it, as by the consuetude of English, by the use and wont of Scottish law. And therefore, once more, instead of saying with Dr. Paley that it is the law of the land which constitutes the basis of property—the law exhibits her best wisdom, when she founds on the materials of that basis, which nature and the common sense of mankind have laid before her.

26. Dr. Thomas Brown, we hold to have been partly right and partly wrong upon this subject. He evinces a true discernment of what may be termed the pedigree of our feelings in regard to property, when he says and says admirably well —that,* "Justice is not what constitutes property; it is a virtue which presupposes property

* Lecture lxxxiii.

and respects it however constituted." And further, that—"justice as a moral virtue is not the creation of property, but the conformity of our actions to those views of property, which vary in the various states of society." But it is not as he would affirm, it is not because obedience to a system of law, of which the evident tendency is to the public good, is the object of our moral regard—it is not this, which moralizes, if we may be allowed such an application of the term, or rather, which constitutes the virtuousness of our respect to another man's property. This is the common mistake of those moralists, who would ascribe every useful direction or habitude of man to some previous and comprehensive view taken by himself of what is best for the good of the individual or the good of society; instead of regarding such habitude as the fruit of a special tendency, impressed direct by the hand of nature, on a previous and comprehensive view taken by its author, and therefore bearing on it a palpable indication both of the goodness and the wisdom of nature's God—even as hunger is the involuntary result of man's physical constitution, and not of any care or consideration by man on the uses of food. The truth is—when, deferring to another's right of property, we do not think of the public good in the matter at all. But we are glad, in the first instance, each to possess and to use and to improve all

that we are able to do without molestation, whether that freedom from molestation has been secured to us by law or by the mere circumstances of our state; and, in virtue of principles, not resulting from any anticipations of wisdom or any views of general philanthropy, (because developed in early childhood and long before we are capable of being either philanthropists or legislators) we feel a strong link of ownership with that which we have thus possessed and used, and on which we have bestowed our improvements; and we are aware that another man, in similar relation with another property, will feel towards it in like manner; and a sense of justice, or its still more significant and instructive name, of equity, suggests this equality between me and him—that, in the same manner as I would regard his encroachment on myself as injurious, so it were alike injurious in me to make a similar encroachment upon my neighbour.

27. We have expatiated thus long on the origin and rights of property—because of all subjects, it is the one, regarding which our writers on jurisprudence have sent forth the greatest amount of doubtful and unsatisfactory metaphysics. They labour and are in great perplexity to explain even the rise of the feeling or desire that is in the mind regarding it. They reason, as if the very conception of property

was that, which could not have entered into the heart of man without a previous sense of justice. In this we hold them to have antedated matters wrong. The conception of property is aboriginal; and the office of justice is not to put it into any man's head; but to arbitrate among the rival feelings of cupidity, or the arrogant and overpassing claims that are apt to get into all men's heads—not to initiate man into the notion of property; but, in fact, to limit and restrain his notion of it—not to teach the creatures who at first conceive themselves to have nothing, what that is which they might call their own; but to teach the creatures whose first and earliest tendency is to call every thing their own, what that is which they must refrain from and concede to others. When justice rises to authority among men, her office is, not to wed each individual by the link of property to that which he formerly thought it was not competent for him to use or to possess; but it is to divorce each individual from that, which it is not rightly competent for him to use or to possess—and thus restrict each to his own rightful portion. Its office in fact is restrictive, not dispensatory. The use of it is, not to give the first notion of property to those who were destitute of it, but to limit and restrain the notion with those among whom it is apt to exist in a state of overflow. The use of law, in short, the great expounder and enforcer

of property, is not to instruct the men, who but for her lessons would appropriate none; but it is to restrain the men who, but for her checks and prohibitions, would monopolize all.

28. Such then seems to have been the purpose of nature in so framing our mental constitution, that we not only appropriate from the first; but feel, each, such a power in those circumstances, which serve to limit the appropriation of every one man and to distinguish them from those of others—that all, as if with common and practical consent, sit side by side together, without conflict and without interference, on their own respective portions, however unequal, of the territory in which they are placed. On the uses, the indispensable uses of such an arrangement, we need not expatiate.* The hundred-fold superiority, in the amount of produce for the subsistence of human

* "The effect (of the abolition of property) would be as instant as inevitable. The cultivation of the fields would be abandoned. The population would be broken up into straggling bands—each prowling in quest of a share in the remaining subsistence for themselves; and in the mutual contests of rapacity, they would anticipate, by deaths of violence, those still crueller deaths that would ensue, in the fearful destitution which awaited them. Yet many would be left whom the sword had spared, but whom famine would not spare—that overwhelming calamity under which a whole nation might ultimately disappear. But a few miserable survivors would dispute the spontaneous fruits of the earth with the beasts of the field, who now multiplied and overran that land which had been desolated of its people. And so by a series, every step of which was marked with increasing wretchedness,

beings, which an appropriated country has over an equal extent of a like fertile but unappropriated, and, therefore, unreclaimed wilderness, is too obvious to be explained. It may be stated however; and when an economy so beneficial, without which even a few stragglers of our race could not be supported in comfort; and a large human family, though many times inferior to that which now peoples our globe, could not be supported at all—when the effect of this economy, in multiplying to a degree inconceivable the aliment of human bodies, is viewed in connexion with those prior tendencies of the human mind which gave it birth, we cannot but regard the whole as an instance, and one of the strongest which it is possible to allege, of the adaptation of external nature to that mental constitution, wherewith the Author of nature hath endowed us.

29. In connexion with this part of our sub-

the transition would at length be made to a thinly scattered tribe of hunters, on what before had been a peopled territory of industrious and cultivated men. Thus, on the abolition of this single law, the fairest and most civilized region of the globe, which at present sustains its millions of families, out of a fertility that now waves over its cultivated, because its appropriated acres, would, on the simple tie of appropriation being broken, lapse in a very few years into a frightful solitude, or, if not bereft of humanity altogether, would at last become as desolate and dreary as a North American wilderness."—Political Economy in connexion with the Moral State and Moral Prospects of Society.

ject, there is one especial adaptation, the statement of which we more willingly bring forward, that, beside being highly important in itself, it forms an instance of adaptation in the pure and limited sense of the term*—even the influence of a circumstance strictly material on the state of the moral world, in all the civilized, and indeed in all the appropriated countries on the face of the earth. We advert to the actual fertility of the land, and to the circumstances purely physical by which the degree or measure of that fertility is determined. It has been well stated by some of the expounders of geological science, that, while the vegetable mould on the earth's surface is subject to perpetual waste, from the action both of the winds and of the waters, either blowing it away in dust, or washing it down in rivers to the ocean—the loss thus sustained, is nevertheless perpetually repaired by the operation of the same material agents on the uplands of the territory—whence the dust and the debris, produced by a disintegration that is constantly going on even in the hardest rocks, is either strewed by the atmosphere, or carried down in an enriching sediment by mountain streams to the lands which are beneath them. It has been rightly argued, as the evidence and example of a benevolent design, that the opposite causes

* See the first paragraphs of the introductory chapter.

of consumption and of supply are so adjusted to each other, as to have ensured the perpetuity of our soils.* But even though these counteracting forces had been somewhat differently balanced; though the wasting operation had remained as active and as powerful, while a more difficult pulverization of the rocks had made the restorative operation slower and feebler than before—still we might have had our permanent or stationary soils, but only all of less fertility than that in which we now find them. A somewhat different constitution of the rocks; or a somewhat altered proportion in the forces of that machinery which is brought to bear upon them---in the cohesion that withstands, or in the impulse and the atmospherical

* "It is highly interesting to trace up, in this manner, the action of causes with which we are familiar, to the production of effects, which at first seem to require the introduction of unknown and extraordinary powers; and it is no less interesting to observe, how skilfully nature has balanced the action of all the minute causes of waste, and rendered them conducive to the general good. Of this we have a most remarkable instance, in the provision made for preserving the soil, or the coat of vegetable mould, spread out over the surface of the earth. This coat, as it consists of loose materials, is easily washed away by the rains, and is continually carried down by the rivers into the sea. This effect is visible to every one; the earth is removed not only in the form of sand and gravel, but its finer particles suspended in the waters, tinge those of some rivers continually, and those of all occasionally, that is, when they are flooded or swollen with rains. The quantity of earth thus carried down, varies according to circumstances; it has been computed in some instances, that the water of a river in a

depositions and the grinding frosts and the undermining torrents that separate and carry off the materials---a slight change in one or all of these causes, might have let down each of the various soils on the face of the world to a lower point in the scale of productiveness than at present belongs to them. And when we think of the mighty bearing which the determination of this single element has on the state and interests of human society, we cannot resist the conclusion that, depending as it does on so many influences, there has, in the assortment of these, been a studied adaptation of the material and the mental worlds to each other. For only let us consider the effect, had the fertility been brought so low, as that on the best of soils, the

flood, contains earthy matter suspended in it, amounting to more than the two hundred and fiftieth part of its own bulk. The soil therefore, is continually diminished, its parts being delivered from higher to lower levels, and finally delivered into the sea. But it is a fact, that the soil, notwithstanding, remains the same in quantity, or at least nearly the same, and must have done so, ever since the earth was the receptacle of animal or vegetable life. The soil therefore is augmented from other causes, just as much, at an average, as it is diminished by those now mentioned; and this augmentation evidently can proceed from nothing but the constant and slow disintegration of the rocks. In the permanence, therefore, of a coat of vegetable mould on the surface of the earth, we have a demonstrative proof of the continual destruction of the rocks; and cannot but admire the skill, with which the powers of the many chemical and mechanical agents employed in this complicated work, are so adjusted, as to make the supply and the waste of the soil exactly equal to one another."—Playfair's Illustrations of the Huttonian Theory. Section III. Art. 13.

produce extracted by the most strenuous efforts of human toil, could no more than repay the cultivation bestowed on them---or that the food, thus laboriously raised, would barely suffice for the maintenance of the labourers. It is obvious that a fertility beneath this point would have kept the whole earth in a state of perpetual barrenness and desolation---when, though performing as now its astronomical circuit in the heavens, it would have been a planet bereft of life, or at least unfit for the abode and sustenance of the rational generations by whom it is at present occupied. But even with a fertility at this point, although a race of men might have been upholden, the tenure by which each man held his existence behoved to have been a life of unremitting drudgery; and we should have beheld the whole species engaged in a constant struggle of penury and pain for the supply of their animal necessities. And it is because of a fertility above this point, the actual fertility of vast portions of land in most countries of the earth---that many and extensive are the soils which yield a large surplus produce, over and above the maintenance of all, who are engaged, whether directly or indirectly, in the work of their cultivation. The strength of the possessory feelings on the one hand, giving rise to possessory rights recognized and acquiesced in by all men; these rights investing a single individual with

the ownership of lands, that yield on the other hand a surplus produce, over which he has the uncontrolled disposal—make up together, such a constitution of the moral, combined with such a constitution of the material system, as demonstrates that the gradation of wealth in human society has its deep and its lasting foundation in the nature of things. And that the construction of such an economy, with all the conservative influences by which it is upholden,* attests both the wisdom and the benevolence of Him who is the Author of nature, may best be evinced by the momentous purposes, to which this surplus produce of land, (the great originator of all that can be termed affluence in the world) is subservient.—"Had no ground yielded more in return for the labour expended on it, than the food of the cultivators and their secondaries, the existence of one and all of the human race would have been spent in mere labour. Every man would have been doomed to a life of unremitting toil for his bodily subsistence; and none could have been supported in a state of leisure, either for idleness, or for other employments than those of husbandry, and such coarser manufactures as serve to provide society with the second necessaries of existence. The species would have risen but a few degrees, whether physical or

* See Art. 7 of this Chapter.

moral, above the condition of mere savages. It is just because of a fertility in the earth, by which it yields a surplus over and above the food of the direct and secondary labourers, that we can command the services of a disposable population, who, in return for their maintenance, minister to the proprietors of this surplus, all the higher comforts and elegancies of life. It is precisely to this surplus we owe it, that society is provided with more than a coarse and a bare supply for the necessities of animal nature. It is the original fund out of which are paid the expenses of art, and science, and civilization, and luxury, and law, and defence, and all, in short, that contributes either to strengthen or to adorn the commonwealth. Without this surplus, we should have had but an agrarian population—consisting of husbandmen, and those few homely and rustic artificers, who, scattered in hamlets over the land, would have given their secondary services to the whole population. It marks an interesting connection between the capabilities of the soil, and the condition of social life, that to this surplus we stand indispensably indebted, for our crowded cities, our thousand manufactories for the supply of comforts and refinements to society, our wide and diversified commerce, our armies of protection, our schools and colleges of education, our halls of legislation and justice, even our altars of piety and temple services.

It has been remarked by geologists, as the evidence of a presiding design in nature, that the waste of the soil is so nicely balanced by the supply from the disintegration of the upland rocks, which are worn and pulverized at such a rate, as to keep up a good vegetable mould on the surface of the earth. But each science teems with the like evidences of a devising and intelligent God; and when we view aright the many beneficent functions, to which, through the instrumentality of its surplus produce, the actual degree of the earth's fertility is subservient, we cannot imagine a more wondrous and beautiful adaptation between the state of external nature and the mechanism of human society." *

* Political Economy in connection with the Moral State and Moral Prospects of Society. C. II, Art. 10. In the appendix to this work on the subject of rent, there are further observations tending to prove that "there is an optimism in the actual constitution of the land, as in every thing else that has proceeded from the hand of the Almighty."

END OF VOL. I.

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on 11 March, 2020